



979/542-5010

"Professional Humane law Enforcement Training"

NOTICE

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Please distribute this message and the attached file widely and promptly to human and veterinary health care professionals, animal control agencies, local rabies control authorities, public health officials and others who have a role in rabies prevention in Central Texas. Physicians especially need to made aware of this situation.

Due to an ongoing national disruption in human rabies vaccine supplies, both FDA-approved manufacturers have limited distribution of rabies vaccine for human use to release on a case-by-case basis only, until availability improves. Within the last week the rabies vaccine inventory at the Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS) has dwindled through regular use to unprecedented low levels. DSHS is unable to restock rabies vaccine at the present time, and DSHS distribution locations will probably be depleted soon. Human rabies vaccine, historically available through DSHS and commercial sources, is now primarily only available through one manufacturer Sanofi Pasteur.

In light of the difficulty in obtaining rabies vaccine, every reasonable effort should be made to locate the exposing animal for quarantine or testing prior to starting PEP. Animal control officers, rabies control authorities, veterinarians, and animal shelter personnel should do everything possible to secure or test animals that have potentially exposed persons to rabies. Communities are encouraged to initiate public reminders on the importance of avoiding contact with stray or unfamiliar animals, especially wildlife, and of the requirement to promptly report all animal bites. These reminders may reduce potential rabies exposures and animals lost to follow-up.

PEP may be delayed in most circumstances until test results or the quarantine outcome is reported. For answers about when PEP may be needed, please contact our office at the number below. The attached file includes instructions to health care providers on how to buy rabies vaccine for their patients. Please note that payment for rabies vaccine or HRIG orders made directly to the manufacturers is the responsibility of the medical provider making the request.

Currently, preexposure rabies vaccine sales have been put on hold to insure that enough remains available for postexposure purposes. We hope that more rabies vaccine will become available nationally by July or August of 2008.

PLEASE BE CAREFUL OUT THERE IN THE FIELD