What constitutes a rabies exposure?

An exposure is any penetration of skin by the teeth of a potentially rabid animal or contamination of scratches, abrasions, open wounds or mucous membranes with saliva or other potentially infectious material (such as brain or nervous tissue) from a potentially rabid animal.

Questions to ask:

- When and where (location) did the exposure occur?
- What was the source animal species? Was the cat, dog or ferret owned, stray or feral?
- Can the exposed person positively identify the source animal?
- Is the source animal available for capture and assessment? If so, has Animal Control been contacted?
- What were the circumstances of the exposure: Provoked or unprovoked? Unusual behavior, sick/wounded animal?
- Was there exposure to rabies virus as defined above? If so, exposed person should contact a healthcare provider.

Is post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP) needed?

### Domestic Dogs, Cats & Ferrets

Was there an exposure to a possibly rabid dog/cat/ferret?  
**NO**  
STOP- PEP not needed.

**YES**

Was the animal captured?  
**NO**  
STOP- PEP not needed.

**YES**

Contact Animal Control. If animal appears normal and healthy, **it will be confined for 10 days** unless circumstances dictate otherwise.

Did the animal die or become ill during the 10-day confinement?  
**YES**  
STOP- PEP not needed.

**NO**

Did animal exhibit **signs of rabies** (unprovoked bite, aggressive attack, sick and/or neurological signs)?  
**NO**

PEP may or may not be needed. Contact Animal Control to locate animal.

Was animal captured within **72 hours**?  
**YES**

Immediately contact Animal Control to collect animal for testing.  
May start PEP pending test results.

**NO**

TEST RESULTS

- **POSITIVE**
  - START PEP.
- **NEGATIVE**
  - STOP- PEP not needed.

STOP- PEP not needed.

† If the test results are Unsatisfactory or Test Not Performed call 919-733-3419 for assessment.