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Nationwide Increase in Reported Human Rabies Exposures: Rabies Post-exposure Prophylaxis Administration

[LINK TO FULL REPORT](#)

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CDC HAN 533

Summary

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is issuing this Health Alert Network (HAN) Health Advisory in response to recent reports of increases in human exposures to rabid or possibly rabid animals and rabies post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP) administration errors. Since July 2026, multiple United States jurisdictions have reported local increases in human rabies exposures involving known rabies vectors or animals in which rabies is less commonly reported. Several high-profile rabies outbreaks and mass rabies exposure events have highlighted the importance of performing careful rabies risk assessments and following evidence-based recommendations for administering PEP. Health departments can help clinicians who provide rabies vaccination in their jurisdictions stay aware of the importance of rabies risk assessments before administering PEP. Clinicians and healthcare facilities can work to make sure that PEP is administered only when appropriate and that human rabies immune globulin (HRIG) and rabies vaccines are administered according to Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) recommendations.

View the [full report](#).

South Dakota Summary

The South Dakota Department of Health (SD DOH) provides rabies consultation to medical providers 24/7 by calling 800-592-1861. SD DOH developed human rabies prevention guidelines, which covers exposure risk, appropriate rabies post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP), and PEP non-adherence guidance, which is found at: <https://doh.sd.gov/media/a52net4u/human-rabies-prevention-guidelines.pdf>

During 2026, 13 rabid animals have been detected in the state (12 bats and 1 skunk). The number of detections is so far this year exceeds 2025 (n=11) and 2024 (n=12), but is lower than in 2023 (n=20). The animal rabies dashboard, which is updated monthly, is available at <https://doh.sd.gov/health-data-reports/data-dashboards/rabies-dashboard/>.