



COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH SERVICES
Public Health

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November 15, 2005

TO: PHYSICIANS, NURSES, CLINIC DIRECTORS AND OTHER HEALTH PROFESSIONALS
RE: MANDATORY REPORTING OF ANIMAL BITES

The Department of Health Services reconstituted the Veterinary Public Health and Rabies Control Program (VPH-RCP) in 1999. The program is responsible for enforcing all County and State statutes related to rabies control and animal bite reporting. When the program was developed, hospitals and numerous physicians were notified that they must report all animal bites to VPH-RCP. It has come to our attention that many health professionals are unaware of their reporting obligations. When animal bites are not reported, the animal will not be quarantined or tested, and rabies exposure is not ruled out.

To protect your patients health and to comply with the law, report all animal bites by telephone or by faxing a completed animal bite reporting form to:

Veterinary Public Health and Rabies Control Program
7601 E. Imperial Highway, Building 500, Suite 105
Downey, CA 90242
Phone: (562) 401-7088
Fax: (562) 401-7112
E-mail: <http://www.lapublichealth.org/vet/biteintro.htm>

Please do not mail the reporting form, since this will delay the institution of quarantine for the biting animal. Information about the biting animal, including an address where it is located, is required and is needed for a quarantine to be instituted. Bite victims should contact their local Animal Control Agency if the animal appears to be unowned or roaming the area. Animal Control Agencies are responsible for impounding stray dogs, and stray animals can be quarantined at the local shelter if they are captured.

If you have any questions or require additional information, please contact Dr. Karen Ehnert or myself at (562) 401-7088.

Sincerely,

C. Patrick Ryan, D.V.M., M.P.H.
Chief Veterinarian