



Summit County Public Health

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

October 17, 2011

Summit County Public Health received notification that a dog owned by a family in Twinsburg died and subsequently tested positive for rabies. The dog had been ill for several days before it died on October 10. The dog had not bitten any person but persons who may have been exposed to the ill dog's saliva have been identified and given recommendations for disease prevention.

There are different strains of rabies associated with specific mammals. These strains can affect any mammal species. Tests performed by the Center for Disease Control showed that the type of rabies carried by the dog was raccoon strain. Summit County Public Health is working with USDA Wildlife Services, and Ohio Department of Health, to identify a potential source of exposure for this dog.

Rabies is a viral disease that can affect any mammal. Because the rabies virus is carried in the saliva, it is most often transmitted through the bite of a rabid animal. The virus is not present in blood, feces, or urine and cannot be transmitted by only touching a rabid animal. There is no risk of rabies exposure from contact with a person who is receiving rabies vaccine. Most rabies cases in the United States occur in wild animals, particularly raccoons, skunks, coyotes, bats, and foxes. Domestic animals, like dogs, cats, or farm animals, may get rabies after being exposed to a rabid animal. Rabies in humans is very rare in the United States. Since 1995 there have been 45 cases of human rabies in the United States; there were no cases of human rabies in Ohio during that time. Most of the human cases were caused by bat strain rabies.

Rabies is nearly always fatal. It affects the nervous system. Animals may show the following symptoms: no fear of humans shown by a wild animal; shyness in a usually friendly pet; restlessness, excitability, aggression, or sudden mood changes; excessive drooling; eating substances not normally eaten; and paralysis. If someone encounters a wild animal with these symptoms, do not try to capture or help the animal. Contact the police or an animal warden. If a pet has these symptoms, contact a veterinarian right away.

Rabies is a preventable disease in animals. Per Summit County Environmental Health Code, all dogs and cats in the Summit County shall be vaccinated against rabies within 30 days after the dog or cat has reached the age of 3 months. Every dog or cat initially

vaccinated must be revaccinated one year later and thereafter at not more than 36-month intervals.

Summit County Public Health will have low-cost vaccination clinics at the following locations:

**Green Recycling Center
5383 Massillon Rd
Green, Ohio 44720
Saturday November 5, 2011
10:00AM – 2:00PM**

**Twinsburg City Police Dept
Maintenance Garage
10075 Ravenna Rd.
Saturday December 3, 2011
10:00AM – 2:00PM**

For more information on rabies, please visit the Summit County Public Health website at www.scphoh.org, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention at www.cdc.gov/rabies or call Summit County Public Health at 330-926-5600.

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