



THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

1200 DEFENSE PENTAGON
WASHINGTON, DC 20301-1200

Nov 14, 2011

HEALTH AFFAIRS

MEMORANDUM FOR ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF THE ARMY (MANPOWER AND
RESERVE AFFAIRS)
ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF THE NAVY (MANPOWER AND
RESERVE AFFAIRS)
ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF THE AIR FORCE (MANPOWER
AND RESERVE AFFAIRS)
DIRECTOR, JOINT STAFF

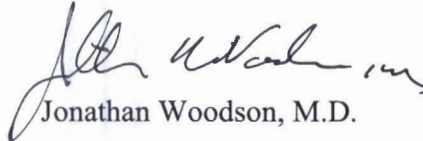
SUBJECT: Human Rabies Prevention During and After Deployment

Reference: Assistant Secretary of Defense for Health Affairs Memorandum, Human Rabies
Prevention During and After Deployment, September 23, 2011

This memorandum and attachment supersede the memorandum and attachment of the same title, referenced above, dated September 23, 2011. Endemic animal rabies in locations around the world often poses an elevated risk of rabies to deployed Service members, Department of Defense (DoD) civilians, and contractors. The investigation into a recent rabies fatality involving a soldier bitten by a dog while deployed to Afghanistan resulted in a review of DoD and Service policies, procedures, and practices on rabies prevention and treatment. The review identified the need for strengthened prevention measures to protect our personnel from this almost universally fatal disease. Most importantly is the need for enforcement of the existing policy in U.S. Central Command (USCENTCOM) General Order 1, prohibiting contact with all domestic or wild animals while deployed. Enforcement of this order in USCENTCOM and in other locations will help ensure that rabies and other zoonotic diseases are not acquired from stray or feral animals. Enhanced rabies prevention emphasis is needed in the following areas, which are further delineated in the attachment:

- Ensuring pre-exposure rabies immunization protocol for selected individuals;
- Reporting and documenting all potential rabies exposures (wild, stray, or feral animals);
- Completion of rabies risk assessments for possibly exposed individuals;
- Adherence to risk-based, post-exposure rabies prophylaxis protocols; and
- Review and quality assurance of all potential rabies exposures reported in theater.

I appreciate your support of these actions to help ensure our deployers with potential rabies exposures are clinically evaluated, treated, and tracked. Questions about this policy should be directed to Dr. Craig Postlewaite, Force Health Protection and Readiness Programs. Dr. Postlewaite may be reached at (703) 578-8513, or at Craig.Postlewaite@tma.osd.mil.



Jonathan Woodson, M.D.

Attachment:
As stated

cc:
Under Secretary for Health, Department of Veterans Affairs
Surgeon General of the Army
Surgeon General of the Navy
Surgeon General of the Air Force
Joint Staff Surgeon
Director, Marine Corps Staff
Medical Officer of the Marine Corps
Director, Health, Safety, and Work-Life, U.S. Coast Guard
Surgeon General, National Guard Bureau
Chief Surgeon, Army National Guard Bureau
Department of Defense Deployment Health Clinical Center