

Potential Exposure to Rabid Cows, Chittenden County

To: Healthcare Providers

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- Please Distribute Widely -

- The Vermont Department of Health is providing guidance to individuals who may have had exposure to two rabid cows on a small Charlotte dairy farm through direct contact or from consuming unpasteurized milk.
- The first animal was not being milked, but individuals who had close contact with it have been advised by the Department of Health to discuss rabies vaccination with their health care providers.
- The second animal was being milked, and milk from that cow may have entered the milk tank on the farm. Anyone who may have consumed raw (unpasteurized) milk from the cow since January 25 has also been advised to consult with their health care provider to consider getting vaccinated against the virus.
- Only those individuals who had direct contact with the infected cows or those who drank raw milk from this Charlotte farm since January 25, 2009 should be considered for treatment.
- We are not aware of any raw milk from the farm being sold to the public.
- While there are no documented cases of rabies transmission from raw milk, we cannot say definitively that there is zero risk.
- There is no risk of exposure to the public from pasteurized milk that originated from the farm. Pasteurization is a process that heats milk to a temperature that kills harmful viruses and bacteria.
- If you have questions regarding exposure to rabies in this situation, please contact the State Public Health Veterinarian, Dr. Bob Johnson, at 802-863-7240.

