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Conjunctivitis Seen in Anchorage

### **Rabies - An Endemic Problem**

In the past several weeks rabies in animals has been reported from Bethel, Port Heiden and Prudoe Bay, involving two dogs and five foxes. Because of exposure to the rabid animals, ten people have undergone post-exposure prophylaxis to rabies.

The problem in Bethel was complicated by the large number of stray dogs in the area. Consequently, a public health quarantine was declared which allowed control of unrestrained dogs. This reduced the possibility of stray dogs serving as intermediate hosts in the transmission of rabies from fox to human. Rabies has never been reported in Southeast Alaska but is endemic in the fox population of Western and Northern Alaska. Rarely has rabies been found in wolves, dogs, cats and caribou. Dogs probably contract the disease from exposure to foxes.

The next issue of the Communicable Disease Bulletin will outline in detail specific treatment of individuals having possible exposure to rabies.

### **Conjunctivitis seen in Anchorage**

In the past several months ophthalmologists in Anchorage have reported increased numbers of conjunctivitis. "This disease is more severe than run of the mill "pink eye" and virus isolation has revealed the causative organism to be Adenovirus, type 7.

The conjunctivitis is characterized by a serosanguineous discharge and may last up to two weeks. There is no long lasting residual. Treatment is purely symptomatic.

*Reported by Ronald Smith, MD*