

- If a wild animal bites a person and it can be safely captured without further risk of exposure, do so using a box or can and heavy leather gloves. If it cannot be safely captured, try to identify it before it goes away. Do not pick the animal up or have any other direct contact with it. For advice, call the Department of Environmental Protection. When prompt assistance is needed, call your local police department or animal control officer. The animal may need to be destroyed and submitted for testing. Because the test for rabies is done on the brain, care must be taken not to damage the animal's head.
- A bat bite may go unnoticed; therefore, when a bat is found in the same room as a person who might be unaware that direct contact occurred (e.g., a baby or child, or a sleeping, intoxicated, or mentally disabled person), it should be safely captured. Once captured, contact your local health department or animal control officer to make arrangements to test the animal.



If Your Pet Has Bitten Someone

- Tell the person bitten to see their doctor immediately.
- Report the bite to the local or state animal control officer.
- Confine the animal and watch it closely. Report any illness or unusual behavior to your veterinarian or local health department.
- Don't euthanize your pet, or allow it to be, within the 14-day quarantine period unless you have been advised to do so

by the public health authorities, a veterinarian, or the animal control officer.

- Check with your veterinarian about your pet's rabies vaccine status.
- After the recommended observation period, have your pet vaccinated for rabies if it does not have a current rabies vaccination.

Your Family Doctor

- It is critically important that you notify your family doctor immediately after an animal bite. If necessary, your doctor will give you anti-rabies treatment. Your doctor will also treat you for other possible infections that can be caused from the bite. The decision to start anti-rabies treatment is left to you and your physician. Staff in the Epidemiology and Emerging Infections Program, Department of Public Health, are available to provide consultation for physicians.



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 Epidemiology and Emerging Infections
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Department of Agriculture
 Animal Control Division
 860-713-2506
www.ct.gov/doag

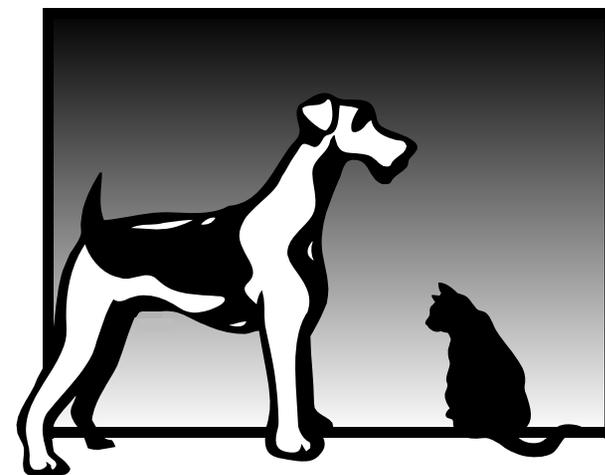
Department of Environmental Protection
 Wildlife Division
 860-424-3011
 Emergency dispatch
 860-424-3333
www.dep.state.ct.us

Connecticut Department of Public Health

LET WILDLIFE STAY WILD

RABIES

- **What you should know**
- **What you should do**



PROTECT YOUR PETS—VACCINATE

Facts About Rabies

- Rabies is a deadly disease caused by a virus that can infect mammals, including people.
- The rabies virus is present in the saliva of rabid animals. It is transmitted primarily by the bite of rabid animals and rarely by introducing saliva into an open wound, eye, or mouth.
- Only mammals get rabies; birds, fish, reptiles, and amphibians do not.
- Raccoons, skunks, woodchucks, bats, foxes, dogs, cats, and some farm animals are most frequently diagnosed with rabies. 
- Squirrels, rats, chipmunks, and mice infrequently test positive.
- Rabies is widespread in the United States and in most parts of the world. Improved rabies vaccination programs and increased public education have decreased the number of cases among humans.
- In the eastern United States, animals other than bats are infected primarily with the raccoon strain of rabies virus, although bat strains can also infect wild and domestic animals. People can be infected with either strain; however, bat strains have been the main source.
- Since 1932, only one human case of rabies was acquired in Connecticut. In 1995, a 13-year-old Greenwich resident died as a result of infection with a bat strain of rabies virus. 

Vaccinate Your Dogs and Cats

- You can protect yourself and others by vaccinating your dogs and cats. If allowed outdoors unsupervised, your dog or cat is more likely to come in contact with a rabid wild animal.
- In Connecticut, all dog and cat owners or keepers are required by law to vaccinate their pets against rabies and to keep those vaccinations up to date. Owners are required to show a vaccination certificate as proof of current rabies vaccination in order to license their dogs.
- The law allows municipalities to sponsor annual, low cost rabies vaccine clinics for dogs and cats.
- Cats are not required to be licensed, but are required to be vaccinated against rabies.

What You Can do to Help Control Rabies

- Be a responsible pet owner.
- Discourage wild animals from having lunch with you by keeping areas around the home clean. Do not leave pet food or table scraps outside, and secure garbage can lids. 
- It is against the law to adopt wild animals as pets. They are a potential rabies threat to their owners and to others. Enjoy all wild animals from a distance, even if they seem friendly. A rabid animal sometimes acts tame. If you see a wild animal acting strangely, report it to the local police or animal control officer or the Department of Environmental Protection. Do not go near it.

- Dogs and cats should not be allowed to roam. They should be confined to the owner's property within a fenced-in area or kept on a leash when being walked.  Confinement to the property will lessen the probability of contact with a wild animal. Report strange acting cats and dogs to the local animal control officer.
- Bats should be kept out of places with a possibility of contact with people, such as homes and schools.
- If your pet is bitten or has had physical contact with a potentially rabid wild animal, contact your veterinarian or local animal control officer for further advice.

If You Are Bitten

- Don't panic, but don't ignore the bite either.
- Wash the wound thoroughly with soap and lots of water. This will greatly lessen the chance of infection. Give first aid as you would for any puncture wound.
- Call your doctor immediately. Explain how you got the bite and follow the doctor's advice. 
 - For additional advice call your local health department.
- When a dog or cat bites a human, try to safely capture it for testing or quarantine by authorities. The quarantine period is 14 days. If the animal is clinically well after 14 days, there is no danger of rabies transmission to the person bitten. Any domestic pet bite should be reported to your local or state animal control officer.