

Got bats?



What you should know about bats and rabies

Rabies is a serious disease caused by a virus. Infected mammals carry the virus in their saliva and neural tissue and can spread it to humans, pets, and livestock. The most common way that rabies spreads is through a bite.

Bats have small, sharp teeth and a bite can be difficult to detect. Not all bats have rabies, but it is impossible to tell which bats are infected by sight. Most human cases of rabies in the United States are caused by bat bites.

A bat exposure may include:

- Bites
- Scratches
- Handling a bat without gloves
- Waking up to a bat in the bedroom
- Finding a bat in a room with an unaccompanied child or incapacitated adult
- Pets or livestock holding a bat in their mouths or being in the same area as the bat (living room, barn, etc.)



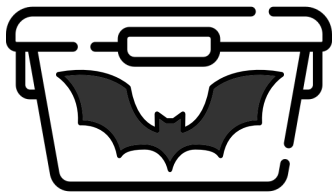
If you, a family member, or pet/livestock are exposed to a bat:

- Try to safely capture the bat for rabies testing.
- If bitten, wash the wound with soap and water. Contact your healthcare provider to discuss medical treatment.
- If a pet is bitten, call your veterinarian.
- If you are not sure if a bat bit you, contact your healthcare provider to discuss your exposure. Medical treatment may still be appropriate.



How to safely capture a bat:

- Use caution and avoid direct contact with the bat. Wear leather gloves if possible.
- Wait until the bat lands and cover it with a small box, coffee can, or another container.
- Slip a piece of cardboard under the container to trap the bat.
- Tape the cardboard tightly to the container to keep the bat inside.
- Call your local game warden or animal control officer to arrange for rabies testing of the bat.



For more information about rabies and bats, visit www.maine.gov/dhhs/rabies or call 1-800-821-5821

