



### What should I do if I have a bat in my house?

- If you find a bat in a room and do not know if you were exposed, close all the windows and doors, and leave the bat in the room.
- Call your city/town's animal control office or a licensed professional to remove the bat.
- If you cannot reach a licensed professional to catch the bat, put on leather gloves and slowly approach the bat when it lands. Place a see-through container over the bat, and slide a lid under the container to trap the bat inside. Securely tape the lid to the container, and punch small holes in the lid so the bat can breathe.
- Call RIDOH to arrange for rabies testing.



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[health.ri.gov/diseases/rabies](http://health.ri.gov/diseases/rabies)



TAKE THE BITE OUT OF  
**RABIES**





### What is rabies and how does it spread?

- Rabies is a deadly viral disease that affects the nervous system (brain, spinal cord, and nerves).
- Rabies is spread by touching the saliva of an infected animal or by being bitten or scratched by an infected animal.
- In Rhode Island, rabies is mostly seen in bats, skunks, raccoons, and foxes. However, dogs, cats, and all other mammals can also be infected.

### How do I protect myself from rabies?

- Make sure dogs, cats, and ferrets are up to date on rabies vaccinations.
- Do not feed, pet, or adopt wild or stray animals.
- Do not feed your animals outside.
- If you see a sick or injured animal do not touch it. Call your local animal control office or the Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management (DEM).
- Make sure your trash is in garbage cans with tight covers so animals are not attracted to it.
- Learn how to bat-proof your home. (<http://bit.ly/nobat>)

### What should I do if I am bitten, scratched, or touch the saliva of an animal?

- Wash the wounded area with soap and water for 10-15 minutes to help kill rabies virus.
- Call your doctor or a hospital emergency room right away.
- Call the Rhode Island Department of Health (RIDOH) and your city/town animal control office to report the incident.
- If the animal is a stranger's pet, ask the owner for his or her phone number.

### What do I do if my pet gets bitten, scratched, or touches the saliva of another animal?

- Try to find out what animal attacked your pet. Do not touch the animal that attacked your pet.
- Wear rubber gloves and use a hose to wash your pet's wounds. Do not touch your pet with bare hands. There may be saliva from the attacking animal on your pet.
- Call your pet's vet immediately – even if you think the wound is minor.
- Call your city/town animal control office to report the incident.

### Phone numbers and other resources

- RIDOH Rabies Control Program: **401-222-2577**
- DEM: **401-222-3070**
- Information on rabies: [www.health.ri.gov/diseases/rabies](http://www.health.ri.gov/diseases/rabies)
- Guidelines for bat-proofing your home: <http://bit.ly/nobat>
- List of licensed Nuisance Wildlife Control Specialists (names and phone numbers): <http://dem.ri.gov/nwcs>