

What is rabies?

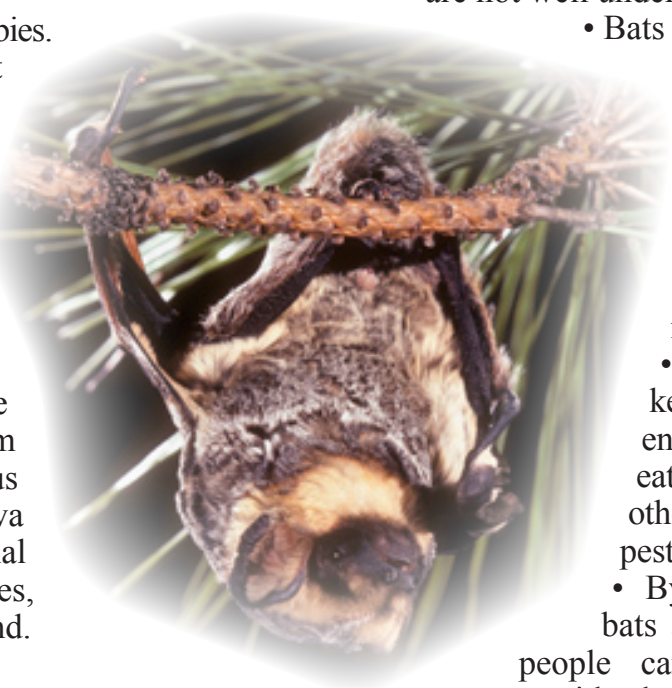
- Rabies is a serious disease that is caused by a virus that attacks the nervous system.
- The disease can kill almost any mammal including humans that get sick from it.
- If identified and treated early, rabies can be 100% prevented.

Who gets rabies?

- Mammals can get rabies. Animals that are not mammals, such as birds, snakes, and fish, do not get rabies.
- People usually get rabies from the bites of rabid animals. On rare occasions, people can get rabies from contact with infectious materials like saliva from a rabid animal that gets into the eyes, nose, mouth, or wound.

How dangerous is rabies?

- Each year, as many as 40,000 people in the US are exposed to animals that might have rabies, and these people receive rabies vaccine shots to prevent the disease.



- Rabies in humans is rare in the US. There are usually 1-2 human cases per year.
- The most common source of human rabies in the U.S. is from bats.

Why should I learn about bats and rabies?

- There are many things about bats that are not well understood:
 - Bats are not blind.
 - They are neither rodents nor birds.
 - They will not suck your blood.
 - Most bats do not have rabies.
 - Bats play a key role in the environment by eating insects and other agricultural pests.
 - By understanding bats and their habits, people can reduce their contact with these animals and protect themselves, their families, and their pets from exposure to disease.

For more information about bats, visit:

<http://www.co.kern.ca.us/eh/VectorControlPage.asp>

and click on the "Bat Control" link to the Bat Conservation International website.

Bat Exclusion Assistance:

Antimite
(661) 324-9646

Banks Pest Control
(661) 323-7858

Clark Pest Control
(661) 325-7211

Dewey Pest Control
(661) 327-1433

Hydrex Pest Control
(661) 324-2701

Pestmaster Services
328-0733

Western Exterminators
(661) 327-0949

Bat Exclusion Kits & Assistance
(800) 235-0262

Kern County Department of Public Health
1800 Mt. Vernon Avenue
Bakersfield, CA 93306
(661) 868-0554



Adapted from the CDC "Bats and Rabies" brochure
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RABIES and BATS



A Public Health Guide

How can I tell if a bat has rabies?

- Rabies can be confirmed only in a laboratory.
- However, be careful of bats that are:
 - active during the daytime;
 - found in a place where bats are not usually seen, like in a room in your home or on the lawn; or
 - unable to fly.
- These bats are far more likely than others to be rabid. Such bats are often the most easily approached.
- The best advice is never handle any bat.

Did I have “contact” or was I “exposed” to possible infection?

- **Exposure to rabies from an infected bat happens if you are bitten.**
- **Contact from seeing a bat** in an attic, in a cave, or at a distance **will not cause rabies.**
- **Contact with bat guano (feces), blood, or urine, or from touching a bat** on its fur (even though bats should never be handled!) **will not cause rabies.**
- If you are not sure that you were bitten because you were awakened by a bat flying in the room where you were sleeping, seek medical care immediately. Bat teeth are very sharp and small and can cause a bite that you may not be aware of.

What if I am bitten by an animal that may have rabies?

- If you are bitten by a bat or other animal that may be infected with rabies—or if infectious material (such as saliva) gets into your eyes, nose, mouth, or a wound—wash the affected area thoroughly with soap and water and get medical help immediately.



- A health care provider will care for the wound and will assess the risk for rabies exposure.
 - Have the following information to help your health care provider determine your risk:
 - the geographic location of the incident
 - the type of animal that was involved
 - how the exposure occurred (provoked or unprovoked)
 - the vaccination status of animal, if known
 - whether the animal can be safely captured and tested for rabies
- Whenever possible, the animal should be captured and sent to a laboratory for rabies testing of the brain.

Are my pets at risk for rabies?

- YES
- Protect your pets by keeping their rabies vaccinations current.
- If you think your pet or domestic animal has been bitten by a bat, contact a veterinarian for help immediately. If you were able to safely capture the bat/animal that bit your pet, have it tested for rabies.

How can I keep bats out of my home?

- Do-it-yourself “bat-proofing” (exclusion) for your home:
 - Carefully examine your home for holes that might allow bats to enter your living area.
 - Any opening larger than a quarter-inch by half-inch should be caulked.
 - Use window screens, chimney caps, and draft-guards beneath doors to attics.
 - Fill electrical and plumbing holes with stainless steel wool or caulking.
 - Ensure that all outside doors close tightly.
 - Cover outside entry points with clear plastic sheeting or bird netting. This will allow bats to crawl out and leave, but not reenter.
 - After the bats have been excluded, the openings can be permanently sealed.
 - Contact Bat Conservation International for more tips on bat exclusion.

- During the summer, many young bats are unable to fly. If you exclude adult bats during this time, the young may be trapped inside and die or make their way into living quarters.
- If possible, avoid exclusion from May through August.
- The best times to “bat-proof” your home are fall and winter.

What do I do if there are bats already in my attic?

- There may be no reason to remove bats from a building if there is little chance for contact with people.

Common Bat Entry Points



- Popular “home remedies” for eliminating bats are temporary, ineffective, and/or illegal. No pesticides are registered for bat control. Moth crystals (naphthalene) can be temporarily effective, but requires replacement often. Ultrasonic and electromagnetic devices do not effectively repel bats.
- Contact a local pest control company that can provide “bat exclusion” services to help remove the bats and prevent bats from returning. A list is provided on this brochure.