

# PREVENTING RABIES



**Public Health**  
Prevent. Promote. Protect.  
Zanesville-Muskingum County

## How to manage bat encounters

## ABOUT RABIES IN BATS

In the US, bats are the most commonly reported animals to have rabies. Rabies is almost always fatal if not treated, however it is 100% preventable through prompt Post-Exposure Prophylaxis (PEP). PEP is a vaccination series given on days 0, 3, 7, and 14 following a bat exposure. The best way to prevent rabies is to avoid encounters with bats.



## SIGNS OF RABIES IN BATS

- Active during the day.
- Found in an unusual place, such as in the home or on the ground.
- Unable to fly or is easily approached.
- Behaves abnormally, such as being disoriented.

Notify animal control or the health department if you notice strange bat behavior. Do NOT touch it!

## WHAT TO DO

### 01 WASH AREA

Immediately wash the affected area with soap & water.

### 02 SEEK MEDICAL ATTENTION

If you suspect you've been scratched or bitten, begin the rabies vaccine series ASAP.

### 03 NOTIFY PUBLIC HEALTH

Guidance on capturing the bat for testing will be provided to determine rabies status.

## WHO TO CONTACT

- If you've been scratched, bitten, or have woken up with a bat in your room, contact a medical provider immediately.
- For guidance on capturing a bat for testing & to notify public health, contact the Zanesville-Muskingum County Health Department at (740) 454-9741.

# Did you know?

A bat's fangs can be so small that a person may not realize that they have been bitten. If you wake up with a bat in your room you should treat it as if you received a scratch or bite.

- Contact an animal control or wildlife agency for assistance with “bat-proofing” your home.
- Check for any openings, as small as 1/4 of an inch.
- Caulk any openings to seal them.
- Use screens, chimney caps, and draft guards to seal attic entrances.
- Fill electrical and plumbing holes with steel wool or caulk.
- Ensure all doors and windows are sealed tightly.
- If bats are in the home, check with animal control and follow all Ohio bat laws before beginning the removal process.

## PREVENT BATS FROM ENTERING YOUR HOME



## HOW TO SAFELY CAPTURE A BAT FOR TESTING



- Find a container like a box or a can large enough for the bat to fit in,
- Locate a piece of cardboard large enough to cover the container opening.
- Wear leather gloves. Do NOT use a towel, pillowcase, etc.
- When the bat lands, approach slowly and place the container over it.
- Slide cardboard beneath it to trap it.
- Secure the lid using tape.
- Contact ZMCHD to have the bat tested for rabies.