

**Bats, Bugs, and Bacteria Month**

* Rabies is found in the saliva and nervous system of an infected animal. The virus is spread from animal to animal, or animal to person by a bite, scratch, or mucus membrane (eye, nose, mouth, open wound) contact with the infected saliva.
* Bats, raccoons, skunks, and fox are the primary source of rabies in the United States. In Michigan, bats and skunks are the most well-known animals to carry the virus.
* A higher number of rabies cases occur during warmer months because animals and humans are more active during the spring and summer.
* Once an animal or a human starts to show symptoms of rabies, death is inevitable.
* In 2009, a 55 year old man died of rabies due to a bat strain of the virus. The patient did not seek treatment following an exposure to a bat months earlier. Prior to this, the last human reported case in Michigan was in 1983. A bat bite is also the suspected cause.

# Facts:

**Rabies**

 **INSERT LOCAL HEALTH DEPARTMENT CONTACT INFORMATION**

[**Michigan Department of Health and Human Services**](http://www.michigan.gov/emergingdiseases/0%2C1607%2C7-186-25807---%2C00.html)

[**Michigan Possible Exposure Flowchart**](https://www.michigan.gov/documents/rabies_pets_flowchart_134247_7.pdf)

[**Michigan Department of Natural Resources**](https://www.michigan.gov/dnr/0%2C4570%2C7-153-10370_12150_12220-27259--%2C00.html)

[**Centers for Disease Control and Prevention – National Center for Infectious Disease**](http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dvrd/rabies/default.htm)

**Information Resources:**

**Available Services:**

**Rabid Animal Symptoms**

Foaming at the mouth and erratic behavior are two of the most widely known rabies symptoms (Furious Rabies); however, sick animals can display unusually passive behaviors as well (Dumb Rabies).

Common rabid animal symptoms:

* “Depression-like” behavior and retreat to isolated places.
* Overly friendly to humans, especially wild animals.
* Signs of paralysis such as a drooping head, paralyzed hind limbs, abnormal facial expressions, and/or a sagging jaw.
* Extreme excitement and aggression such as attacking stationary objects or other animals and/or gnawing and biting their own limbs.

**Residents should take the following precautions to protect themselves, their family members, and their animals from rabies:**

• Never handle unfamiliar wild or domestic animals, even if they appear friendly.

• If bit, wash thoroughly with soap and water and *seek immediate medical attention*.

• Keep doors closed and housing vents well protected against animal entry.

• Do not leave pet food or table scraps outside where they will attract wild or stray animals.

• Keep vaccinations current for all dogs, cats, and ferrets. Do not let your animals play with wildlife. Consult your veterinarian about vaccinations for horses and other livestock.

• Call animal control to remove any stray or to report any sick animals in your neighborhood.

What services are available either locally or statewide?

You can add hyperlinks here too!