



LOGAN COUNTY
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

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Public Health
Prevent · Promote · Protect

Press Release

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HEALTH DEPARTMENT RAISES RABIES AWARENESS

A brown bat recently found in a Logan County home has tested positive for rabies. Rabies is a deadly disease caused by a virus that attacks the central nervous system. The virus is present mainly in the saliva, brain tissue, and spinal fluid of a rabid animal. The Logan County Department of Public Health is raising awareness of the danger of rabies, as bats, a common carrier of the disease, become more active this time of year.

Rabies can only be diagnosed in a bat through laboratory testing; however, there are several signs that can indicate a bat is more likely to be infected. Bats seen during the day or bats found in unlikely places, such as in rooms in your home or on your lawn, or bats that are unable to fly, may indicate the animal is likely infected. Bats, like all wild animals should never be handled.

Any contact with a bat, including a scratch, a bite or any other close contact can pose a risk for rabies infection. Since bats have small teeth, it can be difficult to determine if you have been bitten. If you are near a bat and are not sure you have been exposed, or if you fall asleep and awaken to find a bat in your bedroom, you should call your doctor or your local health department. Furthermore, if you see a bat in the room with an unattended young child or you see a bat near a mentally impaired person, you should also contact your doctor or local health

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department. In any event, you should report a bat found in your home to the health department so the situation can be evaluated.

If a bite does occur, wash the wound thoroughly with soap and water and seek medical attention immediately. By contacting the health department, they can work with animal control to arrange for testing. Any bat that is found should be captured without damaging the head, and only if direct contact with the animal can be avoided.

Bats are not the only animals that can carry the rabies virus. To learn more about animals and rabies, you can go online to the Illinois Department of Public Health website at <https://www.dph.illinois.gov/topics-services/diseases-and-conditions/diseases-a-z-list/rabies>. For additional information or to report a bat or potentially rabid animal, you can contact the Logan County Department of Public Health at 217-735-2317.

Information Source: Illinois Department of Public Health

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