

RABIES FACT SHEET

Rabies is most commonly transmitted to people who are bitten and exposed to the saliva of a rabid animal. Exposure can also occur if saliva or nervous tissue from a rabid animal gets into a scratch or fresh wound.

Exposure to a rabid animal does not always result in rabies. If treatment is initiated promptly following an exposure, rabies can be prevented. If a rabies exposure is not treated and a person develops clinical signs of rabies, the disease almost always results in death.

What can people do to protect themselves against rabies?

- Be sure your dogs, cats and ferrets are up-to-date on their rabies vaccinations.
- Keep family pets indoors at night. Don't leave them outdoors unattended.
- Don't feed, touch or adopt wild animals, stray dogs or cats.
- Don't attract wild animals to your yard.
- Keep your property free of food sources.
- Tightly cap or put away garbage cans.
- Board up any openings to your home.
- Cap chimneys with screens.
- Bat proof your home. Contact the Ulster County Department of Health for tips.
- Encourage children to immediately tell an adult if they are bitten by any animal. Tell children not to touch any animal they do not know.
- If a wild animal is on your property and it did not come in contact with humans or pets, let it wander away. Bring children and pets indoors and alert neighbors who are outside. You may contact a nuisance wildlife control officer who will remove the animal for a fee.
- Report all animal bites or contact with wild animals to the Ulster County Department of Health.
- Don't let any animal escape that has possibly exposed someone to rabies, as it can be observed or tested for rabies to avoid the need for treatment.

For more information, please call the Ulster County Department of Health at 845-340-3010. The UCDOH after-hours emergency line is 845-943-6104.