



Columbiana County Health District

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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A bat from the southern part of Columbiana County recently tested positive for rabies. This bat was found near Hammondsville and submitted for testing due to possible human contact.

Caution should always be used around any wild or unvaccinated animals. It is possible for the transmission of rabies to occur from minor or unnoticed bites from bats. Human and domestic animal contact with bats should be minimized, and bats should never be handled by untrained and unvaccinated persons or kept as pets.

It is very important for residents to make sure all dogs and cats are up-to-date on their rabies vaccination, which is required by law. Vaccination helps prevent pet dogs and cats from coming into contact with rabid animals and transmitting the disease to people.

It is easy to prevent rabies by taking the following precautions:

- Teach children never to handle unfamiliar animals, wild or domestic, even if they appear friendly.
- Have all dead, sick, or easily captured bats tested for rabies if exposure to people or pets occurs.
- Prevent bats from entering living quarters or occupied spaces in homes, churches, schools, and other similar areas where they might contact people and pets.

If you are bitten or scratched by a wild animal or a pet, wash all wounds and contact areas thoroughly with soap and water. Next, contact your physician immediately for evaluation, even with minor injuries. Finally, call the Columbiana County Health District to report the incident. If possible, try to keep the animal confined, but don't risk further injury if the animal is dangerous. If it is a domestic pet, record the name and address of the animal's owner to report to the Health District.

The Columbiana County Health District, in partnership with the USDA Wildlife Services, remains a raccoon drop off location for enhanced rabies surveillance of non-human exposures. This service is for sick or nuisance animals, and fresh road kill.

Persons submitting these specimens must humanely kill the animal, if it is not already deceased, without damaging the skull, the specimen tissue must be fresh. Please do not submit maggot-infested or extremely decomposed specimens. All specimens should be handled using water-repellent gloves and double bagged to prevent further exposure. An address or GPS coordinates of the animal's location is also required. Specimens can be submitted between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m., Monday through Friday at the Health District at 7360 state Route 45, Lisbon. For more information, please call (330) 424-0272

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