

BOONE COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

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BOONE COUNTY
HEALTH DEPARTMENT

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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RABIES CONFIRMED BAT IN BOONE COUNTY

The Boone County Health Department was made aware that a bat has tested positive for rabies in Boone County.

Rabies is a virus that affects the central nervous system of mammals. A human and other mammal may contract the virus through a bite, scratch, or saliva from an infected animal. Due to the small size of a bat's teeth and claws, a bite or scratch may not be seen or even felt by the injured person. A potential rabies exposure should never be taken lightly. If left untreated, rabies is fatal.

Changes in any animal's normal behavior can be early signs of rabies. Particularly bats that are on the ground, unable to fly or active during the day are more likely than others to be rabid. However, testing a wild animal is necessary to confirm the presence of the rabies virus.

To avoid being exposed to rabies, the Boone County Health Departments recommends people take the following steps:

- Do not attempt to pet animals unknown to you
- Do not approach animals that are sleeping, injured, eating, or caring for young
- Avoid contact with wild and stray animals
- Exclude wildlife access to your house, garage, etc.
- Do not leave pet food out where it will attract wildlife
- Keep garbage containers closed and secure
- Have your pets vaccinated against rabies

If a wild or stray animal bites you or you are exposed to its saliva, wash the wound with soap and running water and seek treatment from a doctor or go to the emergency room if the bite is severe or bleeding. Additionally, report the bite or exposure to the Boone County Health Department because the animal will need to be captured for testing or quarantined before you are treated. It is possible to avoid the need to receive rabies treatment based on the possible exposure circumstances.

If you have any questions or concerns please contact the Boone County Health Department Environmental Division at 765-483-4458.

For more information on rabies, visit the Indiana State Department of Health website at: <https://secure.in.gov/isdh/20518.htm>