

## Important Information Pertaining to Bats, Camps & Campers

Although only 2%- 3% of bats test positive for rabies, it is important to know what do in instances where someone may have come in contact with a rabid bat. Contact with a bat can include instances such as finding a live or dead bat in a room upon awakening or any direct physical contact of any sort with a bat. In any case where there is reasonable probability that contact was made with a bat either dead or alive, it is recommended that the bat be properly captured or recovered for testing. Recommendations for properly capturing a live, or recovering a dead bat include wearing gloves and thick clothing to avoid skin contact with the bat, confining a live the bat to one room, trapping the bat within an appropriately sized can or box and scooping the bat into the container which can then be closed and secured. Once a bat encounter has occurred and the bat captured contact local health authorities to collect the bat and perform a rabies examination.

Camps are usually developed in prime environments where bats may look to roost, making bat encounters and exposure more likely in these areas. Building inspections should be made every spring prior to the opening of a camp. Where buildings are to be utilized as sleeping quarters for staff and campers the cabins should be bat proofed as bats are likely to return to places they have occupied and grown accustomed to. Any opening larger than ½ inch by ½ inch should be sealed off. Constant and on-going examinations of sleeping quarters and other buildings should be done to avoid trapping bats inside with humans or animals.

### The following information should be given to camp managers, camp staff and campers:

1. Avoid any contact with live, sick or dead bats.
2. Rabies can be transmitted through basic physical contact, scratches and bites.
3. Prevent human or pet contact with a downed bat.
4. Use proper precautions when capturing or recovering a suspect bat.
5. Avoid damage to the bat's head as the head must be intact for laboratory testing.
6. Call the county health authority for advice regarding all potential bat encounters.
7. Immediately wash suspected contacted areas or scratches with soap and water.

For more information regarding bats see:

<https://www.health.ny.gov/diseases/communicable/zoonoses/rabies/docs/bigbatbook.pdf> for further details.

**Remember Rabies is 100% fatal once disease symptoms are displayed.**