



Rabies Round Up

Rabies Awareness Newsletter

Summer 2018 Issue



We are pleased to announce the first issue of *Rabies Round Up*. You can count on each quarterly issue to feature rabies facts, bite prevention tips, and other resources to prevent this deadly disease from changing your life. Find the latest issues at <http://www.barnstablecountyhealth.org/cape-cod-rabies-task-force>.

What is Rabies?

Rabies is a viral infection that mainly spreads through the saliva of an infected animal. Rabies affects the nervous system and is usually fatal without treatment. While cases of human rabies infection are extremely uncommon in the U.S., raccoons, coyotes, bats, skunks, and foxes among other animals could all spread rabies.

MYTH: There is nothing we can do to vaccinate raccoons against rabies.

FACT: Oral rabies vaccine, distributed by USDA and CCRTF, are being used to combat raccoon rabies.



Weather-proof your home, eliminating cracks and separations

How to Protect your Home from Bats and Raccoons



Cover the top of your chimney



Build a bat house in your back yard

Steps to Protect your Family and Pets from Rabies

1. Know the facts. Rabies is a virus transmitted by the saliva of infected raccoons, bats, skunks, and foxes among other animals. The bite of a rabid animal can infect people, pets, and livestock.
2. Don't feed or touch wild or unfamiliar animals, especially if they appear paralyzed or dazed. Even baby raccoons, foxes, and skunks can carry rabies, so do not try to handle or feed.
3. Keep your dog, cat, or ferret's vaccinations up-to-date.
4. Don't try to separate wild animals. Put on gloves before handling your pet if your pet has been in a fight.
5. Feed pets inside to avoid attracting animals to your yard.
6. If you are scratched or bitten, contact your doctor and local board of health.

Rabies Do's and Don'ts

What is **WRONG** with this picture?



DON'T get close to or touch unfamiliar or wild animals

What is **GOOD** in this picture?



DO vaccinate your pets against rabies

Cape Cod Oral Rabies Vaccination Program

To protect the Cape from raccoon rabies, Cape Cod Rabies Task Force and United States Department of Agriculture's Wildlife Services Program distribute Oral Rabies Vaccine (ORV) from the Cape Cod Canal to Route 149 in Barnstable. Additionally, and in efforts to prevent the reintroduction of terrestrial (land-based) rabies to the Cape, ORV will be distributed west of the Canal in Bourne, Sandwich, Plymouth, Wareham, Kingston, Carver, Middleboro, Rochester, and Marion. These ORV (pictured right) have a strong fish smell that attract raccoons and are unpleasant to people. Raccoons and other animals consume the ORV and are vaccinated against rabies. Dogs who have eaten an ORV have been studied and have experienced no adverse effects except occasionally an upset stomach. Each ORV has a warning on the label. Oral Rabies Vaccine are generally safe if a person comes in contact with them. If a person is exposed to a vaccine, please call Massachusetts Department of Health at (617) 983-6800.



Have Questions? Need Help or Advice?

Contact your local animal control officer or health department. For additional information go to: www.barnstablecountyhealth.org/cape-cod-rabies-task-force, www.aphis.usda.gov/aphis/home, www.mass.gov. Like us on Facebook by visiting our "Cape Cod Rabies Task Force" page.

How to Remove a Bat/Bat Colony from your Home

FIRST: Contact your local board of health to discuss possible human or pet exposure. Once you are sure no exposures have occurred:

To evict a single bat:

1. Put away the broom or tennis racket. It will not attack.
2. Open a window and close the door to that room. Block any other openings to the house. Bats typically leave within a few minutes.

To remove a bat colony:

1. During May or August to October, detect and close each of the entrances except the primary.
2. Install a one-way door above the entrance so that bats can only exit. The bats should be gone in 3 to 4 nights. Close the hole.
3. Colonies of 10+ bats should be reported to MassWildlife at mass.wildlife@state.ma.us.