

Bat Exposure

Bats potentially carry the rabies virus, which is a fatal, but preventable illness. As a result, potential bat exposures should be handled very carefully. If you find a bat in or around your home, do not dispose of the bat yourself. If you have captured the bat or it is found dead, contact the Virginia Department of Health (www.vdh.state.va.us). If the bat has not been captured, contact an animal control specialist to collect the bat.

“In all instances of potential human exposures involving bats, the bat in question should be safely collected, if possible, and submitted for rabies diagnosis. Rabies postexposure prophylaxis is recommended for all persons with bite, scratch, or mucous membrane exposure to a bat, unless the bat is available for testing and is negative for evidence of rabies.” – Center for Disease Control (www.cdc.gov)

Among rabies cases in the United States, it is very common that there was no distinct evidence of a bite. Therefore, in cases where a potential exposure exists (i.e. – bat found in the room of a sleeping child), even if the child seems unharmed, treatment is recommended.

- Treatment consists of the following
 - o Injection of Rabies Immune Globulin and a dose of Rabies Vaccine as soon after exposure as possible
 - o Repeat dose of Rabies vaccine on days 3, 7, and 14 after initial treatment.

What To Do:

If you have found a bat or have further questions, please call us. We will help determine whether your child needs treatment. Remember, if treatment is indicated, it should begin as soon after exposure as possible.

Helpful Links:

<http://www.cdc.gov/rabies/bats/education/>

<http://www.healthychildren.org/English/tips-tools/Symptom-Checker/Pages/Animal-or-Human-Bite.aspx>

