

TXDSHS Zoonosis Control Branch

Potential Exposure Scenarios to Rabies Through Bat Interactions

In general, if you find an injured, sick, or dead bat, do not touch it. If you need assistance, contact your local animal control agency.

New Braunfels Animal Control

830-608-2183

Bat bites are not always visible. Therefore, in situations in which a bat is physically present and there is a possibility of an apparent exposure, the bat should be captured and submitted to a rabies laboratory for testing. If rabies cannot be ruled out by laboratory testing, people with a reasonable probability of an exposure may be recommended for rabies post-exposure treatment (or for domestic animals, a requirement for a booster vaccination(s) and quarantine or euthanasia).

Scenarios that may indicate a reasonable probability of exposure to rabies include:

- a child touches a live or dead bat;
- an adult touches a bat without seeing the part of the body they touched;
- a bat flies into a person and touches bare skin;
- a person steps on a bat with bare feet;
- a person awakens to find a bat in the room with him/her;
- a bat is found near an infant, toddler, or a person who is sensory or mentally challenged;
- a person puts their hand in firewood, brush, a crevice, or a dark space (i.e. a closet), experiences pain, then sees a bat.

Immediately call your local animal control agency to have a trained animal control officer sent to capture the bat. If any possible contact between the bat and a person or domestic animal has occurred:

- do not release the bat; and
- contact your local animal control agency or law enforcement agency to arrange for immediate submission of the bat for rabies testing.