



# RABIES

## What to do if you come in contact with an animal that might carry rabies

In Imperial County, bats have tested positive for rabies, making it an area considered high-risk for rabies. Rabies among domestic animals in Imperial County is rare.

### How do people get rabies?

People usually get rabies from the bite of a rabid animal – an animal with rabies. It is also possible, but rare, that people may get rabies if infectious material from a rabid animal, such as saliva, gets directly into their eyes, nose, mouth, or a wound.

### Which animals get rabies?

The most common wild animals that could carry rabies are **raccoons, skunks, bats, foxes** and **coyotes**. Domestic animals can also carry rabies; these include **cats, cattle, and dogs**. Rabies can only be confirmed through a laboratory test.

### What should a person do if bitten by an animal?

- In Imperial County, the most likely rabies carriers are those animals mentioned above.
- If bitten, immediately wash the bitten area very well with soap and water to minimize the chances for infection.
- Seek medical attention immediately with your doctor.
- Your doctor will care for the wound and judge the risk for rabies exposure.

The following information will help your doctor judge your risk for rabies:

- Knowing where the incident took place
- The type of animal that was involved
- How the exposure occurred (provoked or unprovoked)
- If the animal was vaccinated against rabies or not
- Whether the animal can be safely captured and tested for rabies

Contact **Imperial County Animal Control at (760) 339-6291** to report the animal that did the biting as soon as possible.

### How soon after an exposure should a person seek medical attention?

Medical attention should be obtained **as soon as possible** after an exposure. There have been no cases of someone developing rabies when treatment was given soon and appropriately after an exposure. People exposed to rabies may receive *post exposure prophylaxis* or PEP. In the United States, PEP consists of a regimen of one dose of immune globulin and five doses of rabies vaccine over a 28-day period. Animals may need to be placed in quarantine or tested for possible rabies.

For more information about rabies, please contact:  
Imperial County Public Health Department, Field Nursing  
Tel: (760) 482-4451 • Fax: (760) 482-4738

or

To report a problem with an animal please contact:  
Imperial County Animal Control  
Tel : (760) 339-6291