

5. **Be sure that all family pets are up to date on their rabies vaccination.** *The greatest preventive measure against rabies is to have your dog or cat vaccinated before any exposure to a rabid animal. If you are unsure of your pet's vaccination status please call your veterinarian. Licensing your pet every year is a good method of monitoring vaccination status, and it's the law! Call your local health department for free rabies vaccination clinic availability.*

6. **Animal proof your home and yard.** Make sure all garbage containers have tight fitting lids, do not leave pet food or water outside, do not allow rainwater to collect in outdoor containers or equipment, and keep yard free of garbage and debris.

7. **Do not feed or handle wild animals.**

8. **Prevent your pets from coming into contact with wild animals.**

9. **Screen off vents to attics and other areas that could provide shelter for bats.**

For further information contact the Health Department Inspection Division at 732-745-3100.

<http://co.middlesex.nj.us/publichealth>

Middlesex County  
Public Health Department  
75 Bayard Street  
New Brunswick, NJ 08901  
732-745-3100 TTY: 732-745-8994  
<http://co.middlesex.nj.us/publichealth>



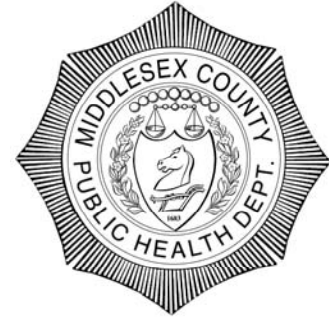
### The Middlesex County Board of Chosen Freeholders

David B. Crabiel, *Freeholder Director*  
Stephen J. Dalina, *Deputy Director*  
Camille Fernicola  
H. James Polos  
Christopher D. Rafano  
Ronald G. Rios  
Blanquita B. Valenti



Rev. 3/08

## What You Should Know About.....RABIES



### The Middlesex County Public Health Department



David A. Papi  
Director-Health Officer

Ronald G. Rios  
Freeholder Chairman  
Public Health & Education

INSPECTION DIVISION

# WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT....RABIES

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**Rabies** is caused by a virus which can infect all warm-blooded mammals, including man. The rabies virus is found in the saliva of rabid animals and is transmitted by a bite, scratch or possibly by saliva of an animal entering an open cut. New Jersey is enzootic for rabies, meaning it is present in the wild animal population throughout the state. Bats, raccoons, skunks, groundhogs, foxes, cats, and dogs represent about 95% of animals diagnosed with rabies in the United States, although any warm-blooded animal can carry the disease.

## Rabies Prevention Guidelines

The **Middlesex County Public Health Department** advises residents to follow these guidelines to avoid rabies exposures to themselves, their family members and their pets.

### 1. **Avoid contact with wild animals or stray pets.**

### 2. **Immediately report any wild animal showing signs of unusual behavior.**

Signs of unusual behavior could be that the animal may:

- ◆ move slowly
- ◆ act tamely
- ◆ appear sickly
- ◆ have problems swallowing



- ◆ have increased saliva
- ◆ have increased drooling
- ◆ act aggressively
- ◆ have difficulty moving
- ◆ have paralysis
- ◆ bite at everything if excited

Residents should avoid any contact with the animal and call the local animal control officer or local police department.

### 3. **If you are bitten:**

- ◆ **Immediately cleanse the wound** thoroughly with soap and water.
- ◆ **Get prompt medical attention** from a physician or hospital emergency room.
- ◆ **Report all animal bites** to the local health department having jurisdiction where the bite occurred.
- ◆ **If you are bitten by a stray pet or wild animal:** Try to confine and isolate the animal, while preventing additional bites and exposures. If captured, contact your local Animal Control Officer. Wild animals must be tested at the state rabies laboratory.

- ◆ **If you are bitten by a dog or cat:** Obtain as much information about the animal as possible, including owner name, address, and telephone number, a description of the animal, and the animal's vaccination status. Biting dogs and cats must be kept under observation for 10 days from the time of the bite to ensure that they are free of rabies. Dogs or cats which die or are euthanized within 10 days after biting a person must be submitted for rabies testing.



- ### 4. **Bites, scratches or exposures to bats:**
- Rabies post exposure treatment should be considered for any physical contact with bats. If you have had contact with a bat or have found a bat in the room of a young child or elsewhere in your home, report the bite or other exposure to your local health department as soon as possible. If feasible, confine the bat for capture so it can be tested for rabies at the state laboratory.

