

Bat Exposure



Anyone who encounters a bat should be evaluated by a medical professional for risk of rabies.

Encounters with a bat include:

Direct contact with a bat = bat bite or bat saliva in your eyes, nose, mouth or fresh wound.

- Finding a bat in the same room of a person who might be unaware that a bite or direct contact had occurred. * a deeply sleeping person awakens to find a bat in the room * or an adult witnesses a bat in the room with a * previously unattended child, mentally disabled person, or intoxicated person

If you discover a bat in your home or cabin:

- **DO NOT TOUCH THE BAT**
- Follow instructions on how to safely capture a bat in your home.
- Contact Mason County Public Health and Human Services. Monday-Friday (360) 427-9670 Ext 400. You will be asked about contact between the bat and people or pets.

If you are bitten by a bat:

- Wash the wound with soap and water
- Get medical attention within 24 hours
- The medical provider should immediately report the bat bite to Mason County Public Health and Human Services

To avoid possible exposure to rabies:

- Do not touch live or dead bats
- Teach children not to touch live or dead wild animals
- Make sure your home's open windows have screens
- Vaccinate pet dogs, cats and ferrets against rabies. Rabies vaccinations are required per Washington State law (WAC 246-100-197)

Related Links:

[Rabies Information](#)

[\(Centers for Disease Control and Prevention\) >](#)

<https://doh.wa.gov/you-and-your-family/illness-and-disease-z/rabies>

How to safely capture a bat in your home

- **Never handle a bat with bare hands.** Wear leather or thick rubber work gloves.
- If the bat is still flying, try gently striking it with a broom or tennis racket in order to knock it down. You can also try to capture it with a net. The brain needs to be in good condition for testing. So do not smash the bat's head.
- Wait until the bat has landed, then place an empty can, small box, or food storage dish over the bat. Slide the cardboard box under the container to contain the bat.
- If the bat is dead or injured and not flying, pick it up with a shovel or dustpan and place it into the container.
- Carefully replace the cardboard with the container lid to securely keep the bat contained or tape the cardboard over the top. Make sure the top is firmly attached to the container so the bat will not escape. Punch small air holes in the lid of the container using a nail or small screwdriver. Holes should be about 1/8 inch.
- Place the container in a quiet area away from heavy human or animal activity. **Do not refrigerate, freeze, or kill a live bat.**
- Always keep the bat in the container until your local health department decides if the bat needs to be tested for rabies.



Common Bat Entry Points

