

Rabies

Rabies is an infectious viral disease that affects the nervous system of humans and other mammals. People get rabies from the bite of an animal infected with rabies (a rabid animal). Any wild mammal, like a raccoon, skunk, fox, coyote or bat can have rabies and transmit it to people. Dogs and cats, and other domestic animals can also transmit rabies. It is also possible, but quite rare, that people may get rabies if infectious material, such as saliva, from a rabid animal, gets directly into their eyes, nose, mouth or a wound.

Because rabies is a fatal disease, the goal of the Pima Animal Control Center is, first, to [prevent human exposure to rabies through education](#) and, second, to respond to any cases in which exposure to a rabid animal might have occurred and impound the animal for quarantine or laboratory testing to determine whether or not exposure occurred.

Most of the rabid animals found recently in Pima County are bats. Awareness of the facts about [bats and rabies](#) can help people protect themselves, their families and their pets. This information may also help to clear up misunderstandings about bats. [Click here for more information about rabies.](#)

What should I do if I come in contact with a bat?

If you are bitten by a bat, or infectious material (such as saliva) from a bat gets into your eyes, nose, mouth or a wound, wash the affected area thoroughly with soap and water, and seek medical advice immediately. Whenever possible, the bat should be captured and sent to the laboratory for rabies testing (please do not try to capture the bat yourself) contact the Pima Animal Control Center immediately at 743-7550.

What should I do if my pet is exposed to a bat?

If you think your pet or domestic animal has been bitten by a bat, contact a veterinarian and the Pima Animal Control Center for assistance immediately. Remember to keep your pets' rabies vaccinations current.

Since January 2001 the Pima Animal Control Center has found 24 rabid animals in Pima County. Eighteen of these animals have been in the area surrounding Interstate 19. Rabies is a serious threat to the public, and to domestic and wild animals. The Pima County Health Department asks you to please leave all wildlife strictly alone. Protect your family by avoiding any contact with wildlife. Please report any strange or unusual behavior of any animal to Pima Animal Control Center at 743-7550. In addition, keep your trash in a covered container, ensure that your pets are vaccinated against rabies and keep them away from wildlife. It is a good idea to feed your pets inside.