

# RABIES



## WHAT IS RABIES?

Rabies is a preventable viral disease that infects the central nervous system (spinal cord and brain). It is almost always fatal once symptoms begin.



## WHAT TO KNOW?

Rabies can be spread to people and pets if they are bitten or scratched by a rabid animal. In the U.S., rabies is found in wild animals such as bats, skunks, raccoons, and foxes.



Skunk



Raccoon



Fox

## HOW CAN I AVOID GETTING INFECTED

The best way to protect yourself from rabies is to avoid bites from wild or unfamiliar animals. You can also protect yourself when:



Leave wild animals alone



Vaccinate your pets



Ask permission to pet a person's dog

## WHEN TO SEE A DOCTOR?

Wash animal bites or scratches immediately with soap and water. Then, see a doctor as soon as possible. The doctor will decide if you need post-exposure treatment.

You should see a doctor if you wake up with a bat in your room because you may have been exposed to rabies.

To learn more, visit the Rabies webpage at [www.sdepi.org](http://www.sdepi.org).

Last Revised 4/17/23

