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THE NORTH COUNTRY HEALTH EFFECT

A health & safety guide brought to you by the Clinton County Health Department.



Preventing rabies

Rabies is a deadly disease. Once symptoms appear in people or pets, there is no cure. Any person or pet that comes into contact with an infected animal is at risk of getting rabies. People are usually exposed to the rabies virus when an infected animal bites them, or when saliva from a rabid animal enters an open cut or mucous membrane (eye, nose or mouth).

The good news is, **if you seek medical care immediately after an animal bite, treatment is very successful.** Knowing how to protect yourself from rabies and what to do if a bite occurs will help you react quickly. See page 3 for more.

Signs of rabies virus in animals

A change in an animal's behavior is usually the first sign. It may act unusually aggressive or tame. A wild animal may be affectionate and friendly, losing its fear of people and natural enemies. It may also become excited or irritable and attack anything in its path.

Other symptoms that are sometimes seen include: staggering, convulsions, choking, frothing at the mouth, and paralysis. Many animals will make very unusual sounds.

IF YOU COME ACROSS INJURED OR BABY WILD ANIMALS DO NOT TOUCH THEM!



Contact a DEC wildlife professional at (518) 897-1291.

What should you do if you are bitten by an animal?

1. Get the animal owner's name, address and phone number.
2. Note where and when the bite happened.
3. Pay attention to the animal's color, condition, size, and how the animal is acting.
4. Wash the wound with soap and water. Seek medical attention for your wound immediately— animal bites can be infected with many diseases besides rabies.
5. Report the incident to the CCHD Rabies Officer by calling 518-565-4870. CCHD will determine if treatment is necessary. Treatment consists of multiple shots.

What happens when you call CCHD after a bite?

CCHD staff:

- Use the information you give to contact the animal owner and make sure the animal did not have rabies at the time it bit you. They do not search for or catch animals.
- Verify the rabies vaccination status of the animal.
- Track the animal's health. If it is alive and well 10 days after it bit you, it did not have rabies when it bit you.

Get your pets vaccinated!

Contact your veterinarian or attend a FREE vaccination clinic offered by CCHD (see page 4).

Protect yourself from rabies

Rabies is most often seen among wild animals such as raccoons, bats, skunks, and foxes, but any mammal can be infected with rabies. **Don't feed, touch, or adopt wild animals, stray dogs, or cats.** Teach children not to touch any animal they do not know and to tell an adult immediately if they are bitten.

Vaccinate your pet dogs, cats, and ferrets, as well as horses and livestock animals. Pets too young to be vaccinated should be kept indoors and only allowed outside while you are watching them. Feed pets indoors. Keep family pets indoors at night. Don't leave them outside unattended or let them roam free. If your pet has been injured by a wild animal, contact your veterinarian to get medical care. Even if your pet has been vaccinated, a booster dose of rabies vaccine may be needed.

Keep your property free of stored bird seed or other foods that may attract wild animals. Tightly cap or put away garbage cans. Board up any openings to your attic, basement, porch, or garage. If your home has a chimney, make sure it is capped with a screen. If a wild animal is living in a garage, shed, or other part of your home, contact a wild animal control expert to have them removed. You can find wildlife control experts who work on a fee-for-service basis in your telephone directory under pest control. If a wild animal is on your property, let it wander away. Bring children and pets indoors and alert neighbors.

Report all animal bites or contact with wild animals that are acting unusual to your local health department. **In Clinton County, call CCHD at 518-565-4870.** Try to keep track of the animal so it can be captured safely.



Bats and the rabies virus

Bats are known to carry rabies. If you see one enter your home, open windows so the bat can escape. Often, people don't know how or when the bat got in. This can be a problem because a person can be bitten by a bat and not know it, especially if a bat is found in a room where a person was sleeping. In most cases, bats found indoors should be captured and sent for testing.

If you find a bat in your home:

- Avoid direct contact. Try not to squash the bat—brain tissue is needed for testing.
- Close windows, room doors, and closet doors.
- Turn the lights on in the room and wait for the bat to land.
- Wearing gloves, cover the bat with a canister or container.
- Slide a piece of cardboard under the container to trap the bat.
- Tape the cardboard tightly to the container.
- Immediately call the Health Department at 518-565-4870.



2025 Rabies Clinics

6:00 - 8:30 PM

June 3	Morrisonville Fire Dept . 1927 Route 22B, Morrisonville
June 17	Ellenburg Depot Fire Dept. 5035 Route 11, Ellenburg Depot
July 17	Dannemora Fire Dept. 167 Emmons St, Saranac
September 4	Peru Fire Dept. 753 Bear Swamp Rd, Peru
October 7	Beekmantown Highway Garage 599 Spellman Rd, West Chazy
December 4	City of Plattsburgh DPW 215 Idaho Ave, Plattsburgh

CCHD hosts FREE rabies clinics!

Protect your pet from rabies! Vaccination is mandatory in New York State for dogs, cats, and ferrets over 4 months of age. Remember, your dog or cat can be vaccinated for rabies when it turns 3 months of age. One year after the first dose, your pet requires a booster, which is then good for three years. For the rest of your pet's life, it should have a booster shot every three years.

ALL pets must be leashed or in a pet carrier. Please bring your pet's shot records. Puppies and kittens must be at least 3 months old. Limit of 3 animals per household.

You must pre-register for any rabies clinic at <https://health.clintoncountyny.gov/rabiesclinics>. Pre-registration for each clinic will open two weeks prior to the scheduled date.

For more health & safety tips, visit
www.clintonhealth.org/nchealtheffect
or scan the QR code.



Information in this guide was adapted from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC, www.cdc.gov); the New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH, www.health.ny.gov); and the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC www.dec.ny.gov).

Updated 5/2025.