

Other than a veterinary clinic, is there somewhere else I can have my animal vaccinated for rabies?

Rabies vaccinations are also given by veterinarians at some local pet supply stores or other locations. Ohio and Lake County requirements do not recognize rabies vaccinations that are not administered by a veterinarian.

Are stray or feral cats at risk for rabies?

All warm-blooded animals can become ill with rabies. Domestic animals that live outside or spend time unattended outside have the opportunity to encounter a wild animal sick and capable of transmitting rabies. If scratched or bitten by a stray or feral animal, it is very important to seek medical attention and call the local health department as quickly as possible for further instruction.

What will happen if I have to take rabies post exposure shots due to a bat, stray cat, or wild animal bite?

If either the health department or your doctor recommends taking rabies shots due to an exposure, there are several options. In most cases, the series of shots is administered at an emergency department of any hospital system. The shots are not especially painful, but are administered over the course of a two week period at specific intervals.

[What You Need to Know about Rabies Vaccine](#)
[CDC Medical Care for Rabies Exposure](#)

How is rabies transmitted?

The virus is in the saliva of an infected animal. People get rabies by being bitten by a rabid animal or by getting saliva from the animal into an open cut or mucous membrane (nose, mouth, or eyes).

What is rabies?

Rabies is a virus that travels to the brain. It occurs in mammals and is seen mostly in bats, skunks, raccoons and other meat-eating animals. People and pets can also get the disease. Once a person or animal becomes sick with rabies, they will die if not properly treated.

Additional information for veterinarians

[Dealing With Rabies: Answers for Veterinarians](#)
[2011 Rabies Compendium](#)
[CDC Veterinarians: What to Do With an Animal that has Bitten a Person](#)
[Important Ohio Rabies Telephone Numbers](#)

Information for the medical community

[Human Rabies PEP Algorithm](#)
[CDC Human Rabies ACIP Recommendations](#)
[2011 Rabies Compendium](#)

General rabies information

[Important Ohio Rabies Telephone Numbers](#)
[New York State General Rabies Information](#)

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Lake County
General Health District



Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

OUR VISION

Lake County citizens enjoy continually improving health and quality of life. Healthy, happy, productive workforce which provides quality health services.

OUR MISSION

Working to prevent disease, promote health, and protect our community.



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Rabies Resource Guide



This pamphlet is available in electronic form with active links at lcghd.org/rabies



**Lake County
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What happens if my dog/cat bites someone?

Ohio law requires these incidents to be reported to the health department jurisdiction where it occurred. That department will follow-up and will require you to “confine” your animal for a 10 day observation. The animal must be kept at your home, in a fenced yard, or on a leash to make sure it is alive after 10 days. This assures the person exposed is not at risk of rabies themselves. Untreated, rabies is fatal. You must also show proof of a current rabies vaccination. If your animal is not current, it must be vaccinated promptly at the end of the 10 day period.

[OAC 3701-3-29](#)

I was bitten or scratched by a dog/cat. What should I do?

Immediately wash the affected area with soap and water and seek medical treatment if necessary. Make sure the local health department has been notified and provide the name, address, and phone number of the owner along with a description of the animal. The health department will contact the owner, check on rabies vaccination status, and make sure the animal is observed for 10 days.

[OAC 3701-3-28](#)

My dog/cat was in a fight with a wild animal. Is there risk of rabies?

If your pet was involved with a raccoon, skunk, fox, or coyote, it is important to contact your veterinarian and health department as quickly as possible. Wash the affected area with soap and water. If possible, safely detain the wild animal or preserve the carcass for testing, if it is dead. Rabies-vaccinated pets may be observed for signs of rabies for 45 days, while unvaccinated animals require strict isolation for 6 months.

[CDC Pets and Rabies](#)

Is your dog/cat current on rabies vaccination?

There has been occurrence of raccoon strain rabies in northeast Ohio for several years. This virus can be transmitted to domestic animals such as dogs and cats, which could also infect owners. The LCGHD feels so strongly that pets must be vaccinated, that a local regulation was passed requiring all dogs, cats, and ferrets over 4 months old to be properly vaccinated for rabies.

[CDC Rabies Prevention in Pets](#)



I found a bat in my house. Should I be concerned?

Bats that have been in contact with pets or in the house when people have been asleep are a concern. Call the health department to discuss your risk of exposure and then evaluate your home for the presence of bats. Carefully capture the bat without smashing the head. Keep the animal in a cool place until turned over to the health department.

[Bats in Buildings](#)

[General Information About Bats](#)

[Managing Bats and Rabies Risk](#)

[CDC Bats and Rabies](#)

[Bats and Rabies](#)

Why should my indoor cat be vaccinated for rabies?

Indoor cats are not excluded from Ohio or Lake County rabies vaccination requirements because animals can occasionally get loose outside or be exposed to bats inside the house.

[Cornell: Why Vaccinate Indoor Cats for Rabies?](#)

What are the signs and symptoms of rabies?

Usually, the first sign of rabies is a change in the animal's behavior. They can become aggressive, attacking for no reason, or they may become very quiet. Wild animals can lose their fear of people and act tame. Rabid animals may walk in a circle, drag a leg, or fall over. Some cannot swallow so they are not able to eat or drink and often drool. Animals usually die within a week after first becoming ill.

[Signs and Symptoms of Rabies](#)

What is being done about rabies in wild animals?

For several years, LCGHD has worked in partnership with federal, state, and local agencies to monitor rabies in our wild animal population. Also, once a year, oral rabies vaccine is distributed by airplane or vehicle to much of northeast Ohio to control rabies in wild animals.

[Preventing the Spread of Raccoon Rabies](#)

[USDA Oral Rabies Vaccination for Raccoons](#)



What can I do to protect my pets and family?

Keep your pets healthy by having a relationship with your local veterinarian for vaccinations and other routine health care, such as heartworm, flea and tick prevention. Also, teach children not to pet any animals they do not know. It is a good practice to not feed wild animals or handle feral cats due to the risk of injury or potential rabies exposure.

[CDC Protect your Family](#)