

What is rabies?

Rabies is a fatal infectious disease caused by a virus that is transmitted by saliva of an infected animal. The virus affects the brain and nervous system.

Rabies virus is not carried in the feces or urine of infected animals or in skunk spray.

Which animals carry rabies?

Only mammals can carry and transmit rabies. While bats had previously been the main source of rabies in Colorado, the number of skunks with rabies has increased in recent years, especially across the Front Range. Since 2012, skunk rabies has grown rapidly in Larimer County.

Though skunks and bats are the main carriers here, foxes, raccoons, coyotes, horses, livestock, dogs, cats, humans and any mammal can get infected through a bite.

Most bats and skunks do not carry rabies, but since healthy wild animals will try to avoid people and pets, if you come in contact with one, it may be sick.

What are the signs of rabies?

Abnormal behaviors:

- Nocturnal animals (those that are usually out at night, likes bats and skunks) are out during the day
- Stumbling, weakness or paralysis.
- Bats on the ground unable to fly
- Unusually aggressive or unusually tame behavior, such as skunks or other wild animals approaching humans or pets.

Do not touch or otherwise try to help sick or injured wild animals!

**Call 970-226-3647, #7
to report sick or injured animals**

What if I'm bitten or scratched by an animal that might have rabies?

- Wash the area with soap and water then seek medical treatment immediately.

How do I keep my pets safe?

- Keep your pets' rabies vaccinations up to date.
- If your pet has never been vaccinated for rabies, begin the series as soon as possible.
- Don't let your dogs and cats roam freely. Follow leash laws.
- If your pet has been attacked by wildlife or a stray domestic animal, seek veterinary care immediately.

What if my pet is too young to vaccinate?

For a puppy or kitten under 12 weeks old:

- Provide constant supervision of the animal when outside,
- Start vaccinations for pets as soon as appropriate and recommended by your veterinarian.
- For 28 days after the vaccination, keep them indoors, and supervised when outdoors.



Got livestock or horses?

Livestock and horses are also at risk for exposure to rabies. Check with your veterinarian on appropriate vaccination for livestock and horses.

**CSU EQUINE AND LIVESTOCK RABIES
INFORMATION SHEET**

<http://bit.ly/10QVu5g>

V A C C I N A T I O N
is the best way to prevent rabies

- For a vaccination to be valid in the event of a rabies exposure, the animal must be vaccinated by a licensed veterinarian.
- Unvaccinated animals may have to be put down or undergo a long and costly quarantine after exposure to rabies.
- Vaccination helps prevent the heartbreak of losing a cherished pet or the cost of quarantine at a clinic or a kennel.
- Vaccination helps stop the spread of this fatal illness.

10 Ways to Keep Safe

1. Vaccinate your pets and livestock against rabies
2. Don't keep wild animals as pets
3. Don't handle dead or live wildlife.
4. Avoid animals displaying unnatural behavior.
5. Prevent contact between pets and wildlife. Obey leash laws.
6. Feed your pets indoors and don't leave pet food outside or uncovered in a barn.
7. Animal-proof your trash: lock trash lids; put trash in secure bins.
8. Prevent wildlife from getting into your house: prune overhanging branches; repair screens; put appropriate caps on chimneys; fill holes in siding. Cover pet doors at night.
9. Teach children never to touch a wild animal, and to report finding a dead or strangely-acting animal to an adult.
10. Report stray animals that appear to be sick to animal control:

If you find a bat inside your home, especially in a living or sleeping area, close off the room and immediately call animal control.

970-226-3647, #7



Who to Call

When you observe wildlife acting strangely or if they appear sick, call:

Larimer Humane Society
970-226-3647, option 7

For questions about rabies,
call the Health Department
M-F, 8-4:30 PM at
970-498-6775.

For more information:

<http://larimer.org/health>
<http://tiny.cc/skunkrabiesvideo>
<http://www.cdc.gov/rabies>

CSU Veterinarians Recommendations for Livestock, Horses:

<http://csu-cvmb.colostate.edu/vth/Pages/rabies-info-northern-colorado.aspx>

Most Important

- **Check** your pets' and livestock's vaccination status with your veterinarian, and keep them up-to-date.
- **Avoid** close contact with wildlife, and keep your family and pets safe.

For more information, contact:

**Larimer County Department of
Health and Environment**
1525 Blue Spruce Drive
Fort Collins, CO 80524
970-498-6775



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Rabies Safety for People and Their Animals

