



Fact Sheet: Bats in your Home

If you find a bat (dead or alive) in your home, you should capture or collect the bat for rabies testing and seek medical attention immediately.

DO NOT throw the bat away!

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

- If you are bitten by a bat, wash the site with soap and water and seek immediate medical attention.
- If you wake up and there is a bat in the room or in the room of an unattended child, capture the bat and call our local health department (616-527-5341)
- Bats have very small teeth and do not leave large marks. It is possible that you could have been bitten by the bat and not know it.
- You cannot get rabies from just seeing a bat, touching a bat on its fur, or coming into contact with its feces, blood, or urine.

What should I do if my pet comes in contact with a bat?

- If you think that your pet has come in contact with a bat, contact your veterinarian and have the bat tested for rabies.

How do I capture a bat?

You will need:

- Leather work gloves
- A small box or coffee can
- Piece of cardboard
- Tape

When the bat lands, approach it slowly. While wearing the gloves, place the box or coffee can over the bat. Slide the cardboard under the container to trap the bat inside. Tape the cardboard to the container and punch small holes in the cardboard to allow the bat to breath. Contact Ionia County Health Department to make arrangements for rabies testing.

Prevent bats from entering your home:

- Examine your home for holes that might allow bats in. Any opening larger than a quarter inch by a half inch should be caulked.
- Common entry points include under shingles and siding, through vents, behind shutters, and down the chimney.
- Use window screens, chimney caps, draft-guards beneath doors to attics, fill electrical and plumbing holes with stainless steel wool or caulking, and ensure that outside doors close tightly.

If you suspect bats are in your home:

- The best times to bat proof your home are in the fall and winter.
- Observe where bats leave at dusk and exclude them by hanging clear plastic sheeting or bird netting over the areas. The bats can crawl out and leave but cannot reenter. Once they are gone, seal the opening.
- Consult a pest Control Company.