



# BATS AND RABIES

- FACT:** BATS, raccoons, skunks & foxes are the 4 warm blooded animals that are presumed to have rabies and must be avoided. Other warm-blooded mammals can carry rabies.
- FACT:** About 4% of all BATS submitted for testing have RABIES.
- FACT:** RABIES is nearly 100% fatal once symptoms occur & 100% preventable with rabies shots.
- FACT:** Laboratory testing of the suspect rabid animal can be done to determine if the animal is infected with RABIES.
- FACT:** RABIES shots can be avoided if the animal can be tested and tests negative.

## WHEN TO CATCH THEM

- ▶ If you or your pet are bitten by a BAT, or if infectious material (saliva, “brain tissue”) from a BAT gets into your eyes, nose, mouth or a wound.
- ▶ If you wake up and find a BAT in your room.
- ▶ If you see a BAT in the room of a child or near a mentally impaired or intoxicated person.
- ▶ If you are not sure if there has been contact with a person or pet.

## WHEN TO LET THEM GO

- ▶ **ONLY AFTER YOU HAVE CONTACTED THE ERIE COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH'S RABIES SPECIALIST AND BEEN ADVISED TO DO SO.**

## HOW CAN I SAFELY CAPTURE A BAT IN MY HOME?

- ▶ You will need a coffee can or similar hard- sided container, a piece of cardboard and tape.
- ▶ When the bat lands on a flat surface, move toward it slowly. Ideally while wearing thick gloves, put the container or coffee can over the bat
- ▶ Then, slide the cardboard under the container to trap the bat inside
- ▶ Tape the lid to the container, and punch holes in the lid to allow the bat to breathe.
- ▶ Do not attempt to kill or crush the bat. The skull of the bat must be intact for testing.
- ▶ If the bat was killed by trauma the bat should be placed in the freezer in a sealed plastic bag or a small plastic container.
- ▶ Do not use towels or blankets to capture bats individuals have been bitten through the fabric doing this.

**Contact the Erie County Department of Health at: 961-6800 during business hours or 961-7898 after hours. A rabies specialist will determine if the bat should be tested.**