



How can rabies be prevented?

- * Have your pets and livestock vaccinated by a licensed veterinarian. An annual or 3 year rabies vaccine is available.
- * Keep dogs in a fenced yard and on a leash when walking.
- * Try to keep cats inside your home, especially, at night.
- * If your pet comes in contact with a bat or skunk, call your veterinarian immediately.
- * Do not keep wild animals as pets.
- * If you see an injured animal, domestic or wild, do not go near it. Call animal control, a veterinarian, or an animal rescue group.
- * If you see an animal fight, do not break it up with your hands or feet. Use an implement such as a rake, or spray the animals with water to stop the fight.
- * Teach children not to approach unfamiliar domestic and wild animals.
- * Discourage wild or stray animals from coming close to your home by: keeping food out of your yard, closing trash cans, sealing chimneys, and keeping brush cleared away from buildings.



Local Resources

Call your animal control officer for information about animal bites.

Tulsa County Animal Control numbers:

- City of Tulsa: (918) 669-6299
- City of Bixby: (918) 366-4430
- City of Broken Arrow: (918) 259-8311
- City of Glenpool: (918) 322-8110
- City of Jenks: (918) 272-4965
- City of Owasso: (918) 272-4965
- City of Sand Springs: (918) 246-2543

Contact the Tulsa Health Department at:

<http://www.tulsa-health.org/community-health/epidemiology/>

Tulsa Health Department
 Planning & Epidemiology
 5051 S. 129th E. Ave.
 Tulsa, OK 74134
 Phone: 918/595-4505
 Fax: 918/595-4588

E-mail: epidemiology@tulsa-health.org

For more information on Rabies, visit:

- Oklahoma State Department of Health
(405) 271-4060
www.health.state.ok.us/program/cdd/infec.html
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
(888) 443-7232
www.cdc.gov



TULSA HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Prepared by Planning & Epidemiology

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and Oklahoma State Department of Health (OSDH)

THD Form 6190.112E (Rev. 9/07)



Rabies

Rabies is a viral disease that affects the central nervous system. Human rabies is rare in the United States, but animal rabies – particularly in some wild animal species – is relatively common. In a typical year, approximately 50 –70 cases of animal rabies are diagnosed in Oklahoma. Every 6 – 8 years there is typically a rise in rabies cases due to skunk population increases. These years are called epizootic years and rabies case numbers may exceed 200. Traditionally, Canadian, Tulsa, and Oklahoma counties have the highest incidence of bat rabies, while skunk rabies is usually found throughout Oklahoma.



TULSA HEALTH DEPARTMENT

HEALTHY CHOICES. HEALTHY PEOPLE. HEALTHY COMMUNITY.

Rabies

How is rabies spread?

Rabies is only found in the brain, spinal cord, and saliva of an infected animal. Transmission occurs if any of these fluids or tissues are introduced into:

- * a bite or open wound (less than 24 hours old)
- * a mucous membrane (eyes, mouth, lining of nose, or genitalia)

The following are **NOT** exposures to rabies:

- * contact with blood or milk
- * contact with urine or feces
- * contact with dried saliva
- * scratch from an animal claw
- * petting or touching the hair of a rabid animal
- * touching bowl, leashes, gates, trailers, or other surfaces the rabid animal contacted.

What is a bite?

A bite is an unprovoked bite.

- * An unprovoked attack is more likely than a provoked attack to indicate a rabid animal.
- * A provoked bite occurs when a person creates a situation that threatens the animal causing it to bite.

Which animals can get rabies?

All mammals can contract rabies. Some common examples are: bats, skunks, raccoons, foxes, coyotes, dogs, cats, horses, and cattle. Animals that are rarely infected are rodents (squirrels, hamsters, mice, and rats), rabbits and hares, and opossums. These animals have never been known to cause rabies in humans in the United States. Birds, reptiles (snakes, turtles, and lizards), and amphibians (frogs and toads), **do not** get rabies.

What are the symptoms of rabies?

Most rabid animals will behave abnormally, but signs will vary. Rabid wild animals will often lose their fear of humans and nocturnal animals may be seen active during the day. Rabid animals may:

- * act overexcited or angry
- * charge and bite animals, humans, or inanimate objects
- * act withdrawn
- * stagger or act lame or paralyzed

Who tests for rabies?

The only way to tell if an animal has rabies is to have the brain tested at the State Health Department Laboratory- the only lab in Oklahoma to test for rabies. The animal's brain must be intact for testing, so:

- * do not shoot the animal in the head
- * do not crush the animal's head

If animal control does not pick up the dead animal and you have it in your possession, use gloves to pick up the dead animal and put it into a trash bag. Animals must be in good condition, they can not be decomposing or decaying. Refrigerate the dead animal until you can give it to a veterinarian or animal control officer. Do not freeze the dead animal.



If the biting animal is a non-routine case, such as an exotic animal, or if the dog, cat, or ferret does not appear healthy, or if a severe bite occurs, call the Tulsa City-County Health Department at (918)595-4505.

What do I do if a bite occurs?

If a bite occurs from any animal, wash the wound immediately with soap and water- continue for at least 10 minutes. **This can reduce the rabies transmission rate about 40 %.** Next, contact your health care provider because antibiotics and a tetanus booster may be needed.

If the biting animal is a dog, cat, or ferret; and the animal appears healthy; and the bite is not extremely severe follow these steps:

- * If the **animal is current on its rabies vaccination** (given by a licensed veterinarian), the animal is allowed to be confined and observed for 10 days in the owner's home to watch for rabies symptoms (except in the city of Tulsa).
- * If the **animal is not current on its rabies vaccination**, the animal must be quarantined at the vet's office or an animal control facility for 10 days to watch for rabies symptoms. If the **animal bites its owner** regardless of vaccination status and the animal is healthy, it is allowed to be confined and observed for 10 days at home to watch for rabies symptoms (except in the city of Tulsa).
- * If the **animal is a stray or unwanted**, the animal must serve a 10 day quarantine at the veterinarian's office, or an animal control facility to watch for rabies symptoms, or be euthanized for testing.
- * **On any of the above scenarios, On the 11th day, the animal must be seen by a vet for a health assessment and a rabies vaccination if needed.**

*In the city of Tulsa, biting animals **MUST** be quarantined at a veterinarian's office or at an animal control facility for 10 days.*