

City of Newton



Setti D. Warren
Mayor

HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES DEPARTMENT

Deborah C. Youngblood, PhD, Commissioner

1000 Commonwealth Ave.
Newton, MA 02459



Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

Telephone 617.796.1420 Fax 617.552.7063
TDD/TTY 617.796.1089

Bat Information

The warmer summer months occasionally bring bats into the living spaces of homes when they seek cooler air.

Because bats can carry rabies, it is important for bats to be tested if they come into contact with a human or a pet. Rabies is serious and important to prevent, but rabid bats are rare.

Contact is considered to be a bite, scratch or other physical contact. If contact occurred, wash the area with soap and water and seek medical attention.

Bats should also be tested if contact might have occurred with an unattended child, sleeping person, mentally impaired person or a pet.

An animal control officer may be able to assist Newton residents with capturing a bat. If animal control is not available, help can be found under pest control services in the phone book or by searching online.

If you choose to capture the bat yourself, or if you find it already dead, here are some tips:

- Don't touch the bat with bare hands, or damage its head during capture because the brain is needed for rabies testing.
- Place the bat in a sealed, clear container and store it in the refrigerator.
- Contact the Health Dept. or Animal Control to drop off the bat so it may be sent for testing. Bats must be dead to be tested.

Rabies testing is conducted at the state lab, and results are typically available within 24 to 48 hours. If the bat tests positive, or is unable to be tested, preventive rabies shots are typically recommended. Your primary health care provider will help you determine what treatment is necessary.

To prevent bats in your home, seal holes, cap chimneys and ensure doors and windows are screened and not left open.

Questions? Call Animal Control at 617.796.2109 or the Health Department at 617.796.1420.

Email: dyoungblood@newtonma.gov