

IF YOUR PET HAS BITTEN SOMEONE

- **Report the bite to the Bland County Animal Control Officer or Bland County Health Department**
- Tell the person who was bitten to see a doctor immediately and to follow their advice.
- If your pet is a dog, cat, or ferret, you will be asked to confine the animal and watch it closely for at least 10 days. This is usually done at your residence to reduce stress on everyone involved, including the animal.
- Report any illness or unusual behavior of your pet to the Bland County Animal Control Officer, the Bland County Health Department, or your veterinarian immediately.
- Do not let the animal stray and do not sell or give the animal away. It must be available for observation by the Bland County Animal Control Officer and other public health officials at all times.
- Do not kill your pet or allow your pet to be killed unless you have been instructed to do so by the Bland County Animal Control Officer or other public health official.
- If your pet is not vaccinated against rabies, have it vaccinated **after** the recommended observation period.

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP CONTROL RABIES

- Have your veterinarian vaccinate your dogs, cats, ferrets, and selected livestock. Keep the vaccinations up to date at all times.
- If your pet is attacked or bitten by a wild animal, report it to the Bland County Animal Control Officer. Be sure your vaccinated dog, cat, or ferret receives a booster vaccination.
- Limit the possibility of exposure by keeping your animals on your property. Do not let pets roam free. This is unsafe for your pet as well as a violation of Bland County Law.
- Do not leave garbage or pet food outside; this may attract stray or wild animals. If possible, please wait the morning of your regularly scheduled pick up day to take your garbage to the roadside.
- Wild animals should not be kept as pets. They are a potential rabies threat to their owners and others. Enjoy all wild animals from a distance, even if they seem friendly. A rabid animal sometimes acts tame. If you see an animal acting strangely, report it to the Bland County Animal Control Officer. **Do not approach it yourself.**

Rabies and Animal Bites What You Should Know And

What You Should Do



Bland County Animal Control

James H. Belcher II, Animal Control Officer

612 Main Street, Suite 201

PO Box 510

Bland, Virginia 24315-0510

Emergency Dial: 9-1-1

Non-Emergency Call:

Bland County E-911 Communications
Center at (276)688-3900 or (276)688-3950

Bland County Administration Office
(276)688-4622 Ext: 290

Fax: (276)688-9758

FACTS ABOUT RABIES

- Rabies is a deadly disease caused by a virus that attacks the nervous system. It kills almost any mammal or human that gets sick from it.
- The rabies virus is mainly in the saliva and brain of rabid animals. It can be transmitted through a bite or by getting saliva or brain tissue in a wound or by getting virus in the eye or mouth.
- Only mammals get rabies. Skunks, bats, foxes, raccoons, dogs, cats, and some farm animals are most likely to get rabies. Rabbits, squirrels, rats, mice, and small pets like gerbils and hamsters can, but seldom get rabies.
- Birds, fish, reptiles, and amphibians do not get rabies.
- Rabies can be prevented in cats, dogs, ferrets, and some livestock with a rabies vaccination.
- § 3.1-796.97:1 of the Code of Virginia states: “The owner or custodian of all dogs and domesticated cats four (4) months of age and older shall have them currently vaccinated for rabies by a licensed veterinarian”.



RABIES AND HUMANS

- Because of improved rabies vaccination programs for pets and better treatment for people who are bitten, rabies cases among humans in the United States are rare. The best way to prevent the spread of rabies to humans is by keeping pets properly vaccinated.
- Children should be reminded not to go near unfamiliar, stray, or wild animals as they may seem friendly but could potentially be infected with rabies.

BATS AND RABIES

- Most of the recent human rabies cases in the United States have been caused by a rabies virus from bats. Any bat that is active by day, is found in a place where bats are not usually seen, or is unable to fly, is far more likely than others to be rabid. Therefore, it is best not to handle bats.

- Most people know when they have been bitten by a bat, but there are some situations in which you should seek medical advice even in the absence of an obvious bite wound. For example, if you awaken and find a bat in your room, or see a bat in a room of an unattended child, or near a mentally impaired or intoxicated person.

- Do not destroy or throw away the bat. Contact the Bland County Animal Control Officer or the Bland County Health Department for more

information on how to have the bat tested and whether anyone needs medical care.

IF YOU HAVE BEEN BITTEN

- **Report the bite to the Bland County Animal Control Officer or Bland County Health Department.**
- **Do not panic!** Wash the wound thoroughly with soap and water. This will greatly lessen the chance of infection. Give first aid as you would for any other wound.
- If possible, capture the animal under a large box or can, or at least identify the animal before it runs away.
- Do not try to pick the animal up. Call the Bland County Animal Control Officer to come and get the animal.
- If it is a wild animal that must be killed, do not damage the head. The brain will be needed to test for rabies.
- Do not let anyone destroy wild animals at random because of a recent increase in rabies cases in the area. Not only is this illegal, but only a few wild animals will be carrying rabies.
- Notify your family doctor and explain the bite. If necessary, they will give the anti-rabies treatment and treatment for other possible infections from the bite.