

What can I do to protect myself and my family?

DO vaccinate your dog, cat or ferret. You can help establish a buffer zone between wildlife and human beings.

DO keep your pets confined preferably on a leash or within a fenced in area.

FEED PETS INDOORS.

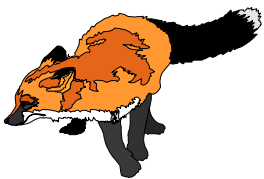
DO keep garbage tidy and contained tightly-preferably in the house or garage.

DO enjoy wildlife from a distance.

Remember a rabid animal sometimes appears tame so keep that in mind if tempted to feed or pet strange animals.

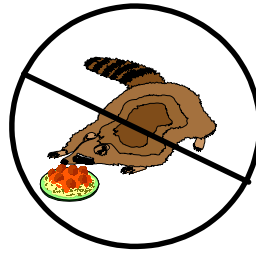
DO spread the word. Be clear with everyone in your family that it is important to stay away from wildlife or dogs and cats that are unfamiliar to them.

DO report sightings of any wild or stray animals that are behaving strangely. Call your local police department animal control officers.



DON'T let your animals roam at will. Confinement to the property will lessen the probability of their having contact with a wild animal.

DON'T feed wild animals or stray cats or dogs.



DON'T leave pet or picnic food outdoors. Food will encourage strays or wild animals to come close to your home.



DON'T leave garbage cans out overnight or uncovered.

*Love your own,
Leave others Alone*

For more information about rabies, call the Department of Health at (401) 222-2577 or toll free 1-800-752-8088 x 2577.



**WHAT
RHODE
ISLANDERS
NEED
TO
KNOW
ABOUT
RABIES
NOW**



THE FACTS

Who gets rabies?

Rabies is a deadly disease caused by a virus that can infect all warmblooded animals including humans. This means that rabies can infect you or your family. Raccoons, foxes, skunks, bats, woodchucks, cats, dogs, and cattle are most likely to get rabies. Rabbits, opossums, squirrels, hamsters, rats and mice seldom get rabies. Birds, reptiles and fish do not get rabies.

How is rabies spread?

The rabies virus is concentrated in the saliva (spit) and other body fluids of infected animals and is spread when they bite or scratch. It also can be passed through the saliva of an infected animal into a wound or the eyes, nose or mouth of a person handling a rabid animal.

Rabies
Vaccine



State law now makes mandatory that all dogs, cats and ferrets be vaccinated against rabies at the age of **3 months**.

VACCINATE INDOOR PETS, TOO

It is also recommended that cattle, horses and sheep be vaccinated against rabies as well.

Why do I need to know about this?

The raccoon strain of Rabies is now present among certain wildlife species in Rhode Island. The disease incidence will rise and fall into the wildlife populations in 3 to 5 year cycles. The bat strain of rabies is present in 3% to 5% of Rhode Island bats. Rabies is in Rhode Island to stay.

What can I do to protect my pets?

Vaccinations are available to ensure that your dog and cat will not get rabies. It is your responsibility to make sure that your pet's rabies shots are kept up to date.



Your veterinarian can provide information on vaccination programs for your dog and cat. In addition, many towns now sponsor rabies vaccine clinics where both dogs and cats may be vaccinated at minimal cost. For more information on rabies vaccine clinics call Rhode Island Veterinary Medical Association (RIVMA) 521-0101.

What to do if you or someone you know is bitten by a cat, dog or wild animal?

Wash the wound immediately with soap and hard running water for at least five minutes. Washing greatly lessens the chance of infection.

Call a physician as soon as you finish washing. If you or the victim do not have a physician go to the nearest emergency care facility.

If your pet has bitten someone or has been bitten, confine your pet and call your local animal control officer.

If the bite is from a wild or stray animal. **DO NOT** try to capture the animal as you may endanger yourself further. Contact your local police department.

RABIES KILLS...

VACCINATE YOUR PETS

