WHAT TO KNOW ABOUT
BATS & RABIES

» BATS CAN HAVE RABIES.
• Avoid touching bats.
• Teach children to never touch bats.
• Keep bats out of your home.

What is rabies?
Rabies is a disease caused by a virus.
Rabies almost always causes death if left untreated.
Rabies is 100% preventable with prompt medical care.

How does rabies spread?
Any warm-blooded animal can get rabies.
Rabies is spread through contact with saliva from infected animals. People most often get rabies from animal bites.
Bats are the only animals that regularly test positive for rabies in Washington state.

Facts about bats and rabies
Most bats do not have rabies. However, bats infected with rabies are found in Washington every year.
Encounters between bats and people increase when the weather warms up in spring and summer.
You cannot tell if a bat has rabies just by looking at it. Testing is needed to confirm if a bat has rabies.

PREVENT RABIES EXPOSURE
Avoiding contact with bats is the best way to prevent being exposed to rabies. Enjoy wildlife from a distance!

Do not touch wild animals, including bats.
Teach children to never touch bats and to tell an adult if they find a bat.
Keep bats out of your home by adding screens to windows and doors and sealing small openings.
Vaccinate your pets.

IF YOU HAVE CONTACT WITH A BAT
Follow these steps if someone has had contact with a bat, or might have had contact with a bat:

Attempt to safely capture the bat for testing if possible.
Wash bite or scratch areas with soap and water.
Call your healthcare provider and/or Kitsap Public Health District at 360-728-2235.
If your pet has had contact with a bat, call your veterinarian.

LEARN MORE: kitsappublichealth.org/bats | doh.wa.gov/rabies | cdc.gov/rabies