



What is considered a potential exposure to rabies?



MONTANA
COMMUNICABLE
DISEASE EPIDEMIOLOGY



BITES

Bites that break the skin from an animal capable of transmitting the rabies virus are a potential rabies exposure. Bites from cats and dogs are the most commonly reported exposures from pets in MT.

NON-BITE EXPOSURES

This type of exposure rarely causes rabies. The contamination of open wounds or abrasions (including scratches) or mucous membranes with saliva or other potentially infectious material, like brain matter, from a rabid animal also constitutes a non-bite exposure.

BAT EXPOSURES

Most bats are not rabid. However, any direct contact between a human and a bat should be evaluated for an exposure. Other situations that might qualify as exposures include finding a bat in the same room as a person who might be unaware that a bite or direct contact had occurred, such as those who are sleeping.



Do you think you were potentially exposed?
Contact your healthcare provider or local health department.

The following is not considered a potential exposure to rabies:

- Touching a surface or object a potentially rabid animal has touched
- Touching a healthy pet that may have handled a bat or other rabid animal recently
- If a bat or skunk is found outside where humans or animals could not have had contact