



# Media Release

July 18, 2025

## Bat from Grey-Bruce tests positive for rabies

Grey Bruce Public Health advises the public to remain vigilant about the risk of rabies after a bat from Grey-Bruce tested positive for the viral disease.

Public Health submitted the big brown bat for testing earlier this week, as part of its investigation into a potential human exposure.

GBPH is continuing to follow up with those involved to prevent rabies infection.

This animal rabies case is the first in Grey-Bruce this year.

“While the risk of acquiring rabies locally remains very low, this case highlights the importance of avoiding contact with wildlife and taking other steps to prevent animal bites and scratches,” says Chimere Okoronkwo, a Senior Public Health Manager with GBPH.

Rabies is usually transmitted to humans through direct contact with saliva from an infected animal, such as through a bite or, less commonly, a scratch. Bats, skunks, foxes, and raccoons are the most common animals to have rabies in Ontario.

Once symptoms appear, the rabies virus is virtually 100% fatal in people and animals. However, rabies vaccines are highly effective at preventing the disease if administered before symptoms occur.

In 2024, there were 91 confirmed wildlife rabies cases in Ontario, with the vast majority involving bats.

In 2024, Grey Bruce Public Health conducted 722 potential rabies exposure investigations. Close to seventy percent of the investigations followed a dog bite, while 131 were linked to a cat bite/scratch and 86 involved a human-wildlife interaction.

Public health advises people to do the following to protect against rabies:

- Stay away from wild animals and always refrain from touching, petting, or handling wildlife or keeping wild animals as pets.
- Avoid feeding wild animals.

A healthier future for all.

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- Keep pets away from wild animals and do not let pets roam unsupervised.
- Wildlife-proof homes and yards.
- Do not disturb baby animals.
- Warn children to stay away from wild or stray animals.
- Do not trap and transport wild animals to a new location.
- Have your pets vaccinated for rabies; it is the law in Ontario that all cats, dogs, and ferrets over 3 months of age are vaccinated for rabies.
- Bat-proof your home or cottage by:
  - Caulking holes in the exterior, even those as small as one-quarter to one-half inch in diameter.
  - Tightening screens, capping your chimney, placing draft guards under doors leading to the attic and outside, and filling plumbing fixture holes with steel wool or caulk.
  - Keeping doors tightly closed when going outside and coming back indoors.

GBPH also advises people to take steps to prevent bites from unfamiliar dogs.

Call the Wildlife Health Information Line at 1-888-574-6656 for information about how to report a suspected rabid animal or visit the [Ontario government's Rabies Webpage](#).

**More Information:**

To connect with the Medical Officer of Health, or the program manager, please contact:

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