

Prevent Rabies

Signs of Rabies

- Symptoms of rabies can vary. An animal with rabies may act very aggressive, or too tame.
- Always avoid animals that are behaving strangely.

What you can do:

- Ensure your pets are up to date on their rabies vaccine.
- Keep pets on a leash.
- Do not leave food or garbage out that can attract wild animals.
- Enjoy wildlife from a distance. Do not feed them or keep them as pets.
- Report any incidents to animal control.

Trash stored improperly can attract wild animals that carry the rabies virus.



Did you know?

Bats are the leading cause of rabies exposure in the US. If you find a bat in your home, please report your exposure.

Learn more

- Visit our website to learn more about rabies in Prince William Health District: vdh.virginia.gov/prince-william/rabies
- For low-cost pet resources including vaccines, spay and neuter programs and more visit: pwsPCA.org/resources-2/
- Prince William Animal Services Bureau: pwcva.gov/department/animal-services
- Manassas City Animal Control: manassasva.gov/police_department/animal_control/index.php
- Manassas Park Animal Control Division: manassasparkpolice.com/discover/animal_control_division.php
- Resolve issues with wildlife by contacting the Virginia Department of Wildlife Resources at 1-855-571-9003

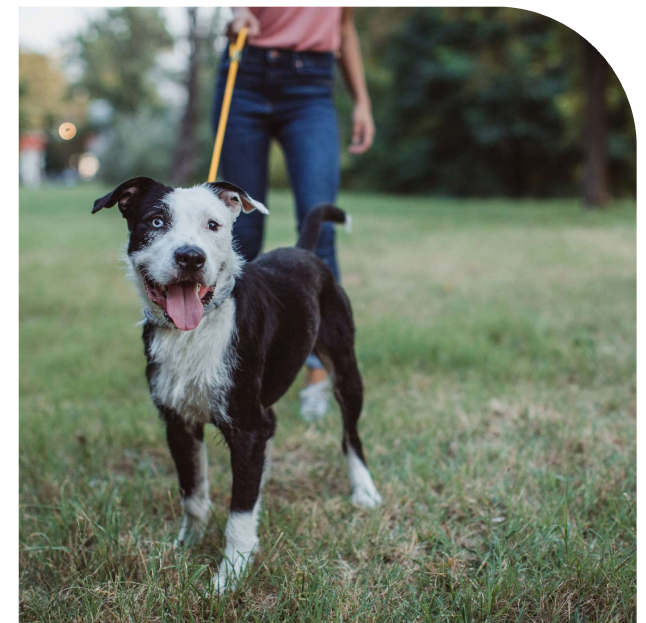
VDH VIRGINIA
DEPARTMENT
OF HEALTH

Prince William
Health District



RABIES AND ANIMAL BITES

What you need to know about rabies in Prince William County, Manassas City, and Manassas Park.



Facts About Rabies

What is rabies?

Rabies is a deadly, but preventable disease. Rabies can be spread to humans from the saliva or nervous system tissue of infected animals, such as pets or wild animals.



What is an exposure?

Exposure to rabies can happen two ways:

1. **Bite exposure:** breaking of the skin by the teeth of an animal.
2. **Non-bite exposure:** contamination of open wounds or cuts, eyes, nose, or mouth, or scratches by saliva or nervous system tissue. Contact with the blood, urine, or feces of an animal is not considered an exposure.

What animals can spread rabies?

- Only mammals can spread rabies. Birds or amphibians are not mammals, so they cannot spread or get rabies.
- Wild animals are the most common source of rabies. High risk animals include **bats, raccoons, foxes, and skunks.**
- Pets, such as **dogs** and **cats** can get and spread rabies if their rabies vaccine is expired.
- **Bats** are the most common way people are exposed to rabies. If you find a bat in your home, report it to animal control so they can capture it for testing.

What should you do if you or your pet(s) are exposed to a wild animal?

- Do not capture or kill the animal.
- Wash the wound(s) with warm, soapy water and call your doctor or veterinarian.
- Write down where the incident occurred and any details about the animal (ex: species, breed, size, color, if the animal had a collar). Use your phone to take a picture of the animal.
- Call animal control. Any animal bites involving humans must be reported to animal control. Exposure of pets to wild animals should also be reported.

Report Animal Bites

Contact your local animal control to make a report:

Prince William County Animal Control Bureau: **(703) 792-6500**

Manassas City Police Department: **(703) 257-8009**

Manassas Park Animal Control Division: **(703) 361-1136**

What will happen if my pet bites or scratches a human?

- Any pet dog, cat, or ferret that may have exposed a human will need to be confined in a building, pen, or other escape-proof enclosure for a **10-day confinement period.**
- During this time, the animal should not be taken outside unless on a leash and under the immediate control of a responsible adult.
- Once your pet has completed the 10-day confinement, the owner must verify its health by calling the **rabies line at (703) 792-5363** or emailing **PWHD Rabies@vdh.virginia.gov.**

Pet Exposure

- Pets exposed to a wild or stray animal are subject to a confinement or watch period to ensure the pet doesn't develop rabies.
- Dogs and cats with an updated rabies vaccine are subject to a 45-day confinement.
- Dogs and cats with an expired rabies vaccine are subject to up to six months of strict isolation
- The length of confinement will be determined by Prince William Health District.

Human Exposure

- If you are bitten or scratched by an animal, the health department and/or your doctor will ask questions to assess the risk of rabies and determine the right care for you.
- This may include rabies post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP). PEP must be given on day 0 (the first day the vaccine is given), and then on days 3, 7, and 14.

Please contact a health professional regarding PEP.

