



- Bats are an important animal that benefits us and the environment. They help control insects, such as mosquitoes. However, as with all wildlife, it is best to appreciate them from a distance.
- Bats are afraid of us and will actively avoid contact with people. A bat will defend itself if you try to handle or touch it.
- Do not handle or touch live or dead bats with your bare hands.
- Bats behaving strangely are more likely to be sick, possibly from rabies. Such behaviours include being active in the daylight, being found on the ground, or not defending themselves when people try to handle or touch them.
- While most bats do not have rabies, it is always a risk where bats are present. Human cases of rabies in Canada are rare—in the last 100 years there have only been 28 cases of rabies in humans. However, since 1967, the few cases of human rabies acquired in Canada have involved bats.



For more information on rabies see: <https://www.saskatchewan.ca/residents/health/diseases-and-conditions/rabies>

CAUTION



- If a bat has rabies, the virus will be in its saliva and can spread to a person through a bite or a scratch or by the bat's saliva contacting a person's eyes, nose or mouth.
- As a bat's teeth and claws are tiny and very sharp, bites and scratches are hard to find.
- Also, a bite or scratch may be painless and go unnoticed.

When to call the Healthline 811

- If a bat bites, scratches, or contacts a person's skin.
 - If possible, wash the area for 15 minutes with soap and warm water.
- If a bat is found in a room with:
 - An unattended child,
 - A sleeping person,
 - A person with an intellectual disability,
 - A person with dementia or other memory problems
 - A person with a mental health disability, or
 - A person with impaired judgement from the use of drugs or alcohol.

A public health official will assess the situation and provide recommendations on next steps. If treatment is recommended for you or a family member, it should be taken. Rabies shots (usually 5 simple injections over a 14-day period) are very effective at preventing the disease. Treatment should not be delayed as human rabies are always fatal. Once symptoms appear treatment will not help, and death will occur within weeks.

Found a bat in your house?

Occasionally, a lone bat—often a lost youngster—will fly into a home, shed, or other building through an open door or window. When this happens the bat just wants to get back outside.

If the bat has not had contact with anyone: the bat may leave on its own if you open a window, turn off the lights, and close off access to other interior spaces. If it doesn't leave, then you may have to catch the bat and release it during the night.



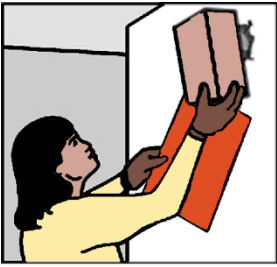
If the bat has had contact with anyone in the house (see "When to call the Healthline 811" above) or it does not leave on its own, you will have to catch it.

How to catch a bat

The **Wildlife Rescue Society of Saskatchewan (WRSOS)** can provide advice and guidance on how to catch a bat: call 1-306-242-7177.

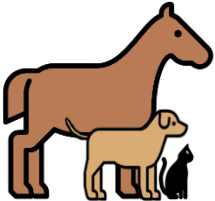
However, if you're unable to reach the WRSOS, the following is one way to catch a bat.

1. Whether the bat is flying or at rest, you should close off the room to keep it away from children and pets, particularly cats. This will encourage the bat to settle down and stay still.
2. Once the bat has landed and you're wearing a long-sleeved shirt and heavy leather gloves, move slowly and quietly and cover it with a small box or other container.
3. Slowly slide a piece of cardboard between the wall and the container, being careful not to pinch the bat.



If the bat had 'contact' with a person, you should keep the bat. Seal the box so there are no openings larger than 5 mm (1/4 inch) and make a few small air holes so the bat can breathe. Store the box in a cool, dark and quiet space, away from pets and children. Then call the **Healthline 811** and they will advise on next steps. A public health official will assess the situation and provide you with recommendations on follow-up, which may include having the bat tested for rabies. (See "When to call the Healthline 811 on the first page for more information on getting public health advice. If you are in doubt about whether there was contact with a bat, call the Healthline 811).

What if my pet or livestock had contact with a bat?



If your pet has contact with a bat, you should call your local veterinarian. They will assess the circumstances and advise on follow-up. If the bat has been captured or is dead, the Vet may ask you to bring it in so it can be sent for rabies testing.

You can help protect your pets and some livestock against rabies by having them vaccinated. Talk to your local veterinarian.

Bats that did not contact a person or a pet or livestock should be released back to the wild. If caught at nighttime, you can release the bat outdoors immediately. If caught during the day,


Don't release a bat in daylight or when temperatures are below 10°C, such as in late fall, winter and early spring. Call the WRSOS at 1-306-242-7177 for advice.

seal the box so there are no openings larger than a 5 mm (1/4 inch) and make a few small air holes. Store in a dark, quiet, cool place away from pets and children. When it is dark, take the box outside. With the opening pointing away from you hold it up high (most bats cannot launch into the air but must drop down to fly). Remove the cardboard lid. Gently tilt the box away from you. The bat should fly out and away. Or you can hold the box against a high wall or the branch of a tree and slowly remove the cardboard. Leave the box resting on the surface for a couple of minutes. The bat should cling to wall or branch. Remove the box and leave the bat in place.



When catching or releasing a bat, remember to wear a long-sleeved shirt and heavy leather gloves

Bats are good for the environment. If you leave bats alone, they will leave you alone.

Have a wildlife question? Call the Wildlife Rescue Society of Saskatchewan at 1-306-242-7177