

QUICK REFERENCE GUIDE: RABIES

Rabies is a **FATAL** disease of the brain of mammals caused by infection with a virus. It is widespread in NY. Rabies vector species are animals with a high rate of infection such as **raccoons, skunks, and bats**. Rabies does not infect birds or reptiles.

An exposed animal may incubate the virus for several months before becoming ill. **SIGNS** can include weakness, paralysis, incoordination, aggression, or a "tame" appearance.

Because the **signs are so variable**, rabies can't be diagnosed or ruled out just by looking at an animal. In some species like fox and raccoon, **rabies and distemper can look identical**. Once signs appear, rabies is almost universally fatal.

TRANSMISSION occurs when saliva, brain tissue, or fluid from the central nervous system of an infected animal contacts a wound, eyes or mouth. This is typically via a **bite, scratch, or splash of fluids**. Frozen carcasses could still be infectious after months.

Rabies can only be diagnosed with a laboratory test of a brain sample. When euthanizing an animal that needs testing, it's important to **avoid damaging the brain and to limit contact with fluids**.

In NY only the **Department of Health** determines if contact with an animal is a **rabies exposure risk** for humans or domestic pets.

When there are any **concerns about human or pet interaction** with wildlife, NYSDEC personnel should **first contact** the local **County Health Department** Rabies Coordinator so they can determine if any exposure occurred. They will coordinate testing and treatment. Make sure to **COLLECT** name, address, and telephone number of any exposed persons for NYSDOH.

For additional support or to submit cases with no human or domestic animal exposure, contact the **Wildlife Health Program**; Delmar (518-478-3034) or Cornell (607-253-3134).

SEE REVERSE FOR DOH CONTACT INFO



**GET
VACCINATED**

**SALIVA,
BRAIN, OR
FLUIDS**

**HUMANS
& ALL
MAMMALS**



THE USUAL SUSPECTS

Number of positive rabies cases by species in NYS from 2007-2024.
Data provided by NYSDOH.



CONTACT INFO FOR NEW YORK STATE COUNTY HEALTH OFFICES

ALBANY 518-447-4580	DUTCHESS 845-486-3400	MADISON 315-366-2361	OTSEGO 607-547-4230	SULLIVAN 845-292-5910
ALLEGANY 585-268-9250	ERIE 716-858-6976	MONROE 585-753-2991	PUTNAM 845-808-1390	TIOGA 607-687-8600
BROOME 607-778-2802	ESSEX 518-873-3500	MONTGOMERY 518-853-3531	RENSSELAER 518-270-2626	TOMPKINS 607-274-6604
CATTARAUGUS 716-373-8050	FRANKLIN 518-481-1710	NASSAU 516-227-9500	ROCKLAND 845-364-2997	ULSTER 845-340-3150
CAYUGA 315-253-1560	FULTON 518-736-5720	NEW YORK CITY 347-396-4100	SARATOGA 518-584-7460	WARREN 518-761-6580
CHAUTAUQUA 716-753-4590	GENESEE 585-344-2580	NIAGARA 716-439-7435	SCHENECTADY 518-386-2810	WASHINGTON 518-746-2400
CHEMUNG 607-737-2028	GREENE 518-719-3600	ONEIDA 315-798-6400	SCHOHARIE 518-295-8365	WAYNE 315-946-5749
CHENANGO 607-337-1660	HAMILTON 518-648-6497	ONONDAGA 315-435-3252	SCHUYLER 607-535-8140	WESTCHESTER 914-813-5000
CLINTON 518-565-4840	HERKIMER 315-867-1176	ONTARIO 585-396-4343	SENECA 315-539-1920	WYOMING 585-786-8890
COLUMBIA 518-828-3358	JEFFERSON 315-786-3710	ORANGE 845-291-2332	ST. LAWRENCE 315-386-2325	YATES 315-536-5160
CORTLAND 607-753-5135	LEWIS 315-376-5453	ORLEANS 585-589-3278	STEBEN 607-664-2438	
DELAWARE 607-832-5200	LIVINGSTON 585-243-7270	OSWEGO 315-349-3545	SUFFOLK 631-854-0000	