



## NEWS RELEASE

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### Keep Your Pets Safe from Rabies this Season

*\*\*Note: A media availability will be held at the Wake County Animal Center on Tuesday, May 17, at 1:30 p.m., featuring a rabies vaccination demonstration. The animal center is located at 820 Beacon Lake Drive in Raleigh\*\**

When going out for a hike, scheduling a camping trip or even just enjoying time in your backyard this spring and summer, the last thing you should have to worry about as a pet owner is the threat of rabies to your dog, cat or other pet.

To ensure the safety of all members of your family, including the four-legged ones, Wake County is encouraging pet owners to make sure their pet's rabies vaccinations are up-to-date.

Rabies is most commonly transmitted from animal to animal, particularly through bites or scratches from wild raccoons, skunks or bats. According to the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#), the rabies virus infects the central nervous system, ultimately causing disease in the brain and death. The good news is that, with prompt medical care, rabies is 100 percent preventable.

The Wake County Animal Center holds rabies clinics throughout the county, providing vaccines for only \$5. Additional information, including a complete list of upcoming clinics, can be found on the [Animal Center website](#).

Preventing rabies and keeping pets safe goes beyond vaccination. While enjoying time outdoors, owners should make sure their pets are safe from wild animals. Keep pets within a fenced-in area, or make sure that they are on a leash when outdoors in an open area such as a park or hiking trail.

Animals infected with rabies often show signs of neurological disorders, such as walking or salivating abnormally. They may also be aggressive. If you see a wild or unfamiliar animal, do not approach it, even if it seems to be behaving normally. Animals showing signs of rabies should be reported to local [animal control](#) as soon as possible. Do not try to trap the animal yourself.

If a wild animal showing signs of rabies bites your pet and draws blood, the pet is at risk for exposure to rabies. Call animal control for assistance right away and let them know what happened. Pets that have had a rabies vaccine need to get a booster shot within five days of the bite.

To keep wild animals away, remember these tips:

- Don't feed stray animals;
- Keep trash around your home contained; and
- Teach children not to approach and play with unfamiliar animals, whether "wild" or not.

Infected bats can also spread rabies. If you find a bat in a living space of your home, try to enclose it in a small room or closed-off area, and then call animal control. Do not let the bat out of your house. Even if you don't think you have been bitten, bat bites are small and may go unnoticed by pets or young children.

Bats in living spaces of a home are considered an emergency. Bats that are in an attic are not and will not be picked up by animal control. If you have a bat in your attic, contact a local pest management company for removal.

If you or someone you know has been bitten by a rabid bat or animal, wash the wound immediately with soap and water and contact your doctor.

Following these tips will help to ensure a safe and fun season outdoors for you and your pet, as well as help stop the spread of rabies in our community.

For more information, visit [wakegov.com/pets](http://wakegov.com/pets) or watch the rabies segment of the May 2016 episode of [WakeGov TV](#).

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