



NEWS RELEASE

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Wake County Reminds Owners to Keep Pets Up-To-Date on Rabies Vaccination

World Rabies Day is Sept. 28, 2016

Note: Wake County Animal Center Director Dr. Jennifer Federico will be available for on-camera interviews today, Sept. 27, from 9 until 11 a.m. The animal center is located at 820 Beacon Lake Drive in Raleigh.

Summer may be over, but the threat of rabies to your pet doesn't end with the change of seasons. North Carolina law requires dogs, cats and ferrets over four months of age to be vaccinated against rabies. As part of the 10th annual World Rabies Day on Sept. 28, 2016, Wake County is encouraging owners to make sure their pet's rabies vaccinations are up-to-date.

The rabies virus is most commonly transmitted from animal to animal, often through bites or scratches from wild raccoons, skunks or bats. Rabies infects the central nervous system, ultimately causing disease in the brain and death. Animals infected with rabies often show signs of neurological disorders, such as abnormal walking or salivating. They may also be aggressive.

If a pet has been exposed to rabies and is unvaccinated or behind on its vaccinations, under state law, it must be humanely euthanized unless owners agree to support a six-month quarantine. The good news is that, with proper vaccination, 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 list of upcoming clinics, can be found on the Animal Center website. Owners unsure of their pet's vaccination status should contact their veterinarian.

Here are additional steps people can take to prevent the spread of rabies:

- When pets are outside, they should be in a fenced-in area or on a leash. Do not leave food outside for pets because it will also attract wildlife.
- 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.
- 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 call animal control. Do not let the bat out of your house.
- If a wild animal showing signs of rabies bites your pet and draws blood or gets in a fight with your pet, the pet is at risk for exposure to rabies. Call animal control for assistance right away. Pets that have had a rabies vaccine need to get a booster shot within 72 hours of the bite.
- If you or someone you know has been bitten by a potentially rabid animal, wash the wound immediately with soap and water and contact your doctor.

For more information, visit the [Wake County Animal Center website](#). Learn more about World Rabies Day on the [Global Alliance for Rabies Control website](#).

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