



COUNTY OFFICE BUILDING • 140 CO HWY 33W • COOPERSTOWN, NEW YORK 13326-1129
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH TELEPHONE: (607) 547-4230 FAX: (607) 547-4385

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

BAT TESTS POSITIVE FOR RABIES

The Otsego County Department of Health reports that a bat tested positive for rabies on Friday October 11, 2019. One unvaccinated cat and two people were exposed. The individuals were started on rabies post exposure treatment. The cat will be placed in a six month quarantine.

Rabies is a fatal viral infection that can be transmitted through the bite or scratch of an infected animal or contact with saliva to broken skin or mucus membranes. When there is an exposure to an animal that may be rabid, the animal should be sent for rabies testing. The public is cautioned to stay away from any stray or wild animals and instruct their children to do so also. In the event that a pet is in contact with a wild animal, owners should avoid contact with saliva that may be on the pet's fur. Wearing gloves when handling their pet or waiting a couple hours to handle the pet reduces that chance of contact with the virus. Any person that awakens with a bat in their room, finds a bat in a room with an unattended small child or has a pet in contact with a bat should safely capture the animal and contact the health department.

Pet owners need to know that state law requires all dogs, cats and domesticated ferrets to be vaccinated against rabies. If an unvaccinated pet or one that's overdue for its vaccination comes in contact with a rabid or suspected rabid animal, the pet must be either euthanized or, with the Department of Health's approval, strictly quarantined for six months. Pets up to date with rabies vaccination should be given a rabies booster vaccine within 5 days of exposure.

For further information regarding rabies please call the Otsego County Department of Health at (607) 547-4230.