



ONEIDA COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

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"PROMOTING & PROTECTING THE HEALTH OF ONEIDA COUNTY"

OCGOV.NET/HEALTH

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County Health Department Reminds Residents of Concerns with Bats in Your Home

Although most bats do not have rabies, bats are one of the most reported rabid animals and are the leading cause of rabies deaths in humans in the United States according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The Oneida County Health Department advises residents of the concern of rabies if bats get into your home. There are steps people should take to safeguard their homes to keep bats out and steps to take when they find a bat in their home.

Most bats migrate to warmer climates in the colder season making it a better time to bat proof your home. Look for openings into your home, even very small openings, such as cracks and crevices and fill these gaps. Take precaution to make sure bats are not already living in your home as you do not want to entrap them. This endangers the bat and may also cause the bat to seek another exit and get into your living space.

Bats are nocturnal and if you see one out in daylight or struggling to fly, it may be rabid. If you find a bat in your home, the health department advises you to try to capture it but only if you can do so safely. Capturing the bat will allow for rabies testing and could prevent unnecessary treatment for exposure. While in your home, it is possible that the bat bit without you knowing. Bat bites can be extremely small and not always visible. To catch a bat, you should:

- Close all doors and windows to prevent the bat from escaping.
- Wait for the bat to land
- While wearing gloves, slowly approach the bat and place a coffee can or plastic container over it trapping it against the wall or floor.
- Carefully slip a flat piece of cardboard under the can or container trapping the bat inside.
- Tape the cardboard to the can sealing the bat inside.
- Once the bat is secured, contact the Oneida County Health Department at 315-798-5064 for instructions.

Oneida County Health Director, Daniel W. Gilmore, PH.D., MPH stated, "Rabies is serious, but there are things we can all do to protect ourselves and the community. Vaccinate your pets, bat-proof your home and stay away from wild animals." Dr. Gilmore explained, "If you have questions regarding rabies, contact the health department for assistance."

For more information, visit <https://www.ocgov.net/oneida/envhealth/MosquitoesTicksRabies> or call 315-798-5064.

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