



TRINITY COUNTY HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

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PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Trinity County Health Advisory

TRINITY COUNTY – Trinity County has seen a recent uptick in rabies infected wildlife interacting with domestic animals and humans. The Trinity County Rabies Control Program is asking the public to take precautions to avoid exposure.

Rabies is a rare but serious disease of the brain caused by the rabies virus. Exposure occurs when the saliva of an infected animal is introduced into the blood stream of a human or domestic animal, usually through a bite. All mammals, including humans, are susceptible to infection. Bats and skunks are the animals that most frequently get rabies; however, it can also be found in foxes and raccoons. Domestic animals such as dogs, cats, horses, and cattle can also get rabies, but this is not as common due to readily available rabies vaccination for pets.

An animal with rabies will not behave normally. Strange or unnatural behavior in an animal that has rabies can include:

- A wild animal that seems unusually tame or isn't afraid to approach people
- An animal out during the day that is usually active only at night, such as a skunk, fox, or bat
- A dog or cat that has trouble walking, eating, or drinking, or has a change in personality or how they act
- A normally calm animal that acts in an agitated or aggressive manner
- A bat that can't fly or has been caught by a dog or cat

If you are bitten, scratched or otherwise exposed to the saliva of a potentially rabid wild animal you should immediately wash and scrub the area with soap and running water and seek immediate medical care. Decisions on rabies post-exposure treatment are made between a patient and the health care provider, following an assessment of the exposure incident and consultation with public health officials. It is essential that rabies post-exposure injections are provided



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promptly, once symptoms develop rabies is 100% fatal. Whenever possible the animal will be tested for rabies. Do not shoot a potentially rabid animal in the head, as the brain needs to be tested for the rabies virus.

Prevention is the best defense against rabies:

- The best way to prevent rabies in pets is through vaccination. Trinity County requires that all dogs and cats, 4 months or older be vaccinated for rabies.
- Speak to your veterinarian about all pet mammals being vaccinated (Horses, Cattle, Llamas, Alpacas, Goats, Sheep, Etc..).
- Leave all wild animals alone. Do not approach, touch, or try to feed any animals that you don't know.
- Never adopt or bring wild animals into your home.

For more information on rabies prevention visit:

<https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/RabiesResources.aspx>

or contact Trinity County Public Health Branch at 530-623-1358

To report suspicious wildlife, contact the California Department of Fish and Wildlife in Redding at 530 225-2300 or Trinity County Environmental Health at 530-623-1459

For domestic pets and rabies concerns contact Trinity County Animal Control 530-623-8126