

Frequently Asked Questions

What is "rabies"?

Rabies is a deadly viral disease that attacks the brain and spinal cord of an infected animal or person.

How does a rabies infection happen?

Rabies is transmitted from direct contact with the saliva from an infected, rabid animal. Direct contact includes bites and scratches.

Who is at risk for rabies?

Any mammal can get rabies including humans.

Common animals in Kentucky with rabies are bats, raccoons and skunks. However, dogs, cats, horses and cows can get rabies.

How is rabies prevented?

Vaccinating pets, staying away from wildlife, and seeking medical care if exposed.

Additional Resources:

Kentucky State Public Health Veterinarian

Kelly Geisbrecht, DVM, MPH
Email: kelly.giesbrecht@ky.gov

Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources

Toll Free: 800-858-1549
Local: 502-564-3400

University of Kentucky Veterinary Diagnostic Lab KY State Rabies Map

www.vdl.uky.edu

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

<https://www.cdc.gov/rabies>

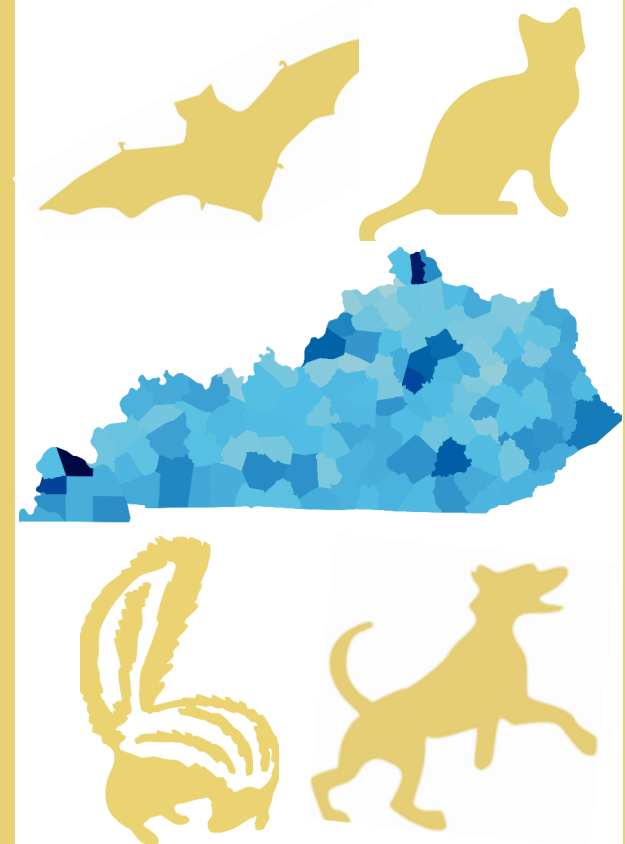
College of Agriculture, Food and Environment Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory

This product was created in recognition of World Rabies Day in order to better the health of Kentucky's animals and people. We would like to thank the following collaborators:

Sarah Robbins, Dr. Jacqueline Smith, PhD, MSc, Rachel Hughes, Dr. Craig Carter, DVM, MS, PhD, Dr. Kelly Geisbrecht, DVM, MPH

Rabies in Kentucky

A guide to the rabies virus in the Bluegrass State



Presented by:



Kentucky Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

What to do if a person is bitten or scratched by an animal

Step 1: Wash the bite or scratch wound immediately with soap and water for at least 10 minutes

Step 2: Call your doctor or go to a hospital emergency room, depending on the severity of the wound

Step 3: Try to get a description of the animal, or if possible and safely, confine the animal so it can be tested

Step 4: Contact your local health department or local animal control officers

What to do if a pet is bitten by a wild animal

Step 1: Wear gloves to handle your pet, so you do not become exposed to the attacking animal's saliva.

Step 2: Confine your pet and make sure it does not run away.

Step 3: Immediately call your veterinarian and local animal control.

Vaccination is the only way to prevent the spread of rabies.

Be sure to work with your vet to keep your pets protected against rabies.

Rabies in Kentucky

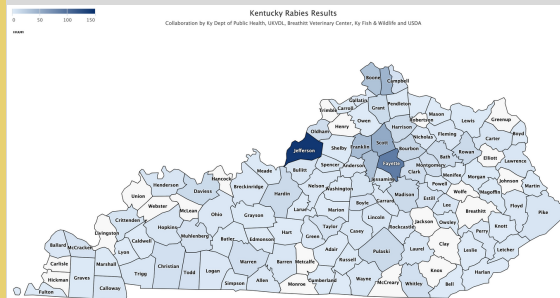


Figure 1. Map of all animals tested for rabies by county of origin, 2019

Source: University of Kentucky Veterinary Diagnostic Lab (UKVDL)

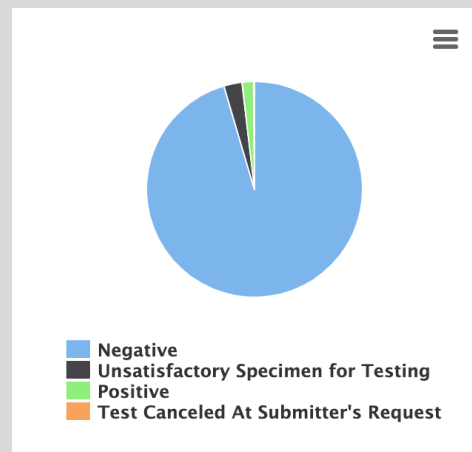


Figure 2. Results of rabies testing (all species) in Kentucky, 2019

Confirmed Positive: 15 cases
Confirmed Negative: 835 cases
Total Tested: 875 cases

Source: University of Kentucky Veterinary Diagnostic Lab (UKVDL)

2019 Kentucky Rabies Cases

Confirmed Cases by Species:

Bat: 12 positive cases

Raccoon: 1 positive case

Skunk: 1 positive case

Dog: 1 positive case



World Rabies Day September 28th, 2020

"World Rabies Day is the first and only global day of action and awareness for rabies prevention. It is an opportunity to unite as a community." *Global Alliance for Rabies Control*

This year's theme focuses on *vaccination and collaboration* to have **zero** cases by 2030.