RABIES At-A-Glance

Rabies was first identified in Nassau County in 2004. Since then, the Town has been proactive in educating residents about rabies and how they can protect themselves and their pets. Below are some basic precautions to help you, your family and your pets avoid rabies.

DO . . .

DO get your pets vaccinated and make sure shots are up-to-date.

DO call your doctor, hospital or local health department immediately if you're bitten or scratched by a wild or stray animal. Wash the wound thoroughly with soap and water.

DO call your veterinarian if your pet appears to have been in a fight.

DO tightly cover or put away garbage cans.

DO board up any holes or openings to your house that could serve as animal nests.

DO stay away from animals that are aggressive, overly friendly or appear ill.

DON'T . . .

DON'T touch, pet, feed or adopt wild or stray animals.

DON'T feed pets outside.

DON'T leave pets outside unattended.

DON'T try to catch animals that are acting unusually. Avoid aggressive or overly friendly animals or animals that appear ill. Avoid skunks, raccoons and bats that are out during the day.

The information in this brochure was provided by the New York State Department of Health.

Town of Oyster Bay Animal Shelter
Department of
Environmental Resources
150 Miller Place, Syosset, NY 11791
677-5784

HOURS OF OPERATION

Monday through Saturday
8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

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Closed Sundays & Holidays

Residents experiencing animal problems after regular business hours, and on Sundays and holidays, should contact their local police precinct.

Town Supervisor
JOHN VENDITTO

Town Board
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JOHN VENDITTO
Town Supervisor

PROTECTING YOUR FAMILY & PETS Against RABIES

Web Site Address:
www.oysterbaytown.com
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RABIES FACT SHEET

What is Rabies?

Rabies is a fatal viral infection that affects the central nervous system (brain and spinal cord). The most common carriers in our area are raccoons, skunks and bats. Infected mammals can transmit rabies to humans and other mammals. Rabies is almost always fatal once symptoms appear, but, fortunately, only a few human cases are reported each year in the United States.

Can Rabies be prevented?

Yes. Preventive rabies vaccinations are available for dogs, cats, ferrets, sheep, cattle and horses, as well as humans in high risk groups such as veterinarians and those in other professions which expose them to the rabies virus. Nassau County also conducts oral raccoon rabies vaccination drops to reduce the incidence of rabies in raccoons. People who have come into contact with infected animals receive a series of three rabies shots over 14 days plus a dose of rabies immune globulin at the time of the first shot.

Are there ways to reduce the risk of Rabies exposure?

Yes. Here are some basic tips:

Vaccinate Pets. They serve as a buffer between wildlife rabies and man. Protect them and you will reduce your exposure to rabies. Pets too young to be vaccinated should be kept indoors until they are properly innoculated. The Town sponsors a free Rabies Clinic for dogs, cats and ferrets in September. For the date and time, check your Town Calendar or visit the Town's Web site, www.oysterbaytown.com.

Admire wildlife from a distance. Don't touch, pet, feed or adopt wild or stray animals.

Avoid animals that are acting unusually. Stay away from animals that are aggressive, overly friendly or appear ill. Raccoons, skunks and bats are nocturnal animals. If they're out during the day, avoid them. Animals that appear ill or are acting unusually may be reported to the local State Environmental Conservation office, 631-444-0310, Nassau County Health Department, 516-227-9663 (742-6154 nights, weekends and holidays), or the police.

Don't make yards attractive to animals. Feed pets inside and don't leave them outside unattended, especially at night. Tightly cap, or put away, garbage cans. Store bird seed in a place that in inaccessible to wild animals. Board up any holes or openings to your house that could serve as animal nesting sites or entrances to your attic, basement or garage. If nuisance wild animals are living in parts of your home, contact a wildlife control expert about having them removed. They are listed in your telephone directory under pest control. For feral cats, contact the Town's Animal Shelter, 677-5784. Under the Town's Trap-Neuter Return Program, feral cats are trapped and brought to a veterinarian, who examines, spays or neuters, and inoculates them against rabies. Following recovery from surgery, the feral cats are returned to their colonies to live out their lives. Over time, the colonies dwindle due to a lack of new kittens to keep them going.

What should you do if you are bitten or scratched?

Wash the wound thoroughly with hot water and seek medical attention immediately. The human rabies vaccine is extremely effective, but only before symptoms begin. Report the bite to the Nassau County Health Department, 516-227-9663. If possible, have someone keep track of the animal that bit you so the animal can be captured for testing.

What if a pet is attacked?

Wear gloves before handling a pet following an attack. You can be exposed to the rabies virus by handling your pet after an attack and getting saliva from the rabid animal on your hands. Call a veterinarian. Pets that have been immunized against rabies will still need a booster shot. Pets that have not been immunized must either be euthanized or strictly confined for four months.

Where can you get more information on Rabies?

For additional information, go to:

New York State Department of Health (www.health.ny.gov/diseases/communicable/zoonoses/rabies)

Nassau County Department of Health (www.nassaucountyny.gov/agencies/Health/rabies.html

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (www.cdc.gov/rabies)