



## **LaSalle County Health Department**

### **BAT EXPOSURES**

The types of exposure to bats that necessitate the need for rabies PEP (Post Exposure Prophylaxis) if the bat cannot be tested negative for rabies include:

- Bat bite
- Presence of saliva in a mucus membrane or skin abrasion
- Physical contact with a bat without heavy gloves where either a bat bite or bat saliva entering a mucus membrane or skin abrasion cannot be ruled out
- Live bat found in the room with a sleeping person
- Live bat found in a room with a small child or other person who cannot clearly indicate whether a bite or saliva exposure may have taken place

The PEP treatment is very expensive, costing the victim several thousands of dollars and involves several office visits for treatment.

### **IF THERE HAS BEEN AN EXPOSURE**

## **DO NOT SHOO THE BAT OUTSIDE!!!!**

If you have had an exposure as listed above here are some ways to safely capture the bat to submit for testing:

- Place a container some kind, (coffee can, cool whip bowl, etc.) over the bat and slip a heavy piece of paper between the can and wall trapping the bat inside. Place lid on container and refrigerate until you can call Animal Control, 815-434-8661 or LaSalle County

Health Department, 815-433-3366. If this occurs over a week-end or holiday the bat will keep in the refrigerator until the next business day.

- If you throw a towel over the bat, be sure to wear bite proof gloves to pick the bat. The bat can be placed in a zip lock bag.
- Do not attempt to kill the bat by hitting it. The head must be intact for testing. Also, smashing the head could aerosolize the rabies virus that is in the bat's brain, blood and saliva.
- Never pick up a bat without bite proof gloves, their fur could have been contaminated by their saliva during grooming.

Observe your roof lines, dormers, vent systems, and chimneys around your dwelling at dusk for outgoing bat activity. During the day look at these areas for bat dropping (guano); bat guano will have a shiny appearance and be brittle due to the remains of insects. The guano will usually be found in piles near the roost. There may also be staining from the bats body oils.

Bats are a protected species in Illinois. You may need to call an Illinois profession wildlife control operator for removal, control, exclusion and relocation services. A list is attached of service providers