

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

September 22, 2025

Rabies-Positive Bat Confirmed in Grand Traverse County

The Grand Traverse County Health Department (GTCHD) has confirmed that a bat found inside a local residence tested positive for rabies. The bat was tested by the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) after possible human exposure. All individuals identified as exposed are receiving the necessary post-exposure medical care.

Rabies is a fatal viral disease that affects the central nervous system of mammals, including humans. It is transmitted through the saliva of infected animals, typically through a bite or scratch. Once symptoms appear, rabies is almost always fatal—but it is preventable with prompt medical care and vaccination after exposure.

GTCHD strongly encourages the community to be vigilant and take precautions to prevent potential rabies exposure.

Bats & Rabies in Michigan:

- Bats are the most common carrier of rabies in Michigan.
- Not all bats carry rabies, but as of September 18, 33 bats in Michigan have tested positive.
- Bat bites and scratches may be too small to notice, so any direct contact with a bat should be taken seriously.

GTCHD recommends the following steps to protect yourself and families against rabies:

1. **Avoid contact with wild animals**, especially bats, raccoons, skunks, and foxes.
2. **Keep pets vaccinated** against rabies. This includes cats, dogs, ferrets, horses, cattle, and sheep.
3. **Secure your home**—seal openings to prevent bats from entering.
4. **Never handle bats or other wild animals** with bare hands.
5. **If a bat is found in your home, do not release it.** Safely contain the bat without directly handling it in anyway and contact GTCHD at 231-995-6051 to discuss testing and possible exposure.
6. **Seek medical attention immediately** if bitten or scratched by an animal or after contact with a bat.

For more information, contact the GTCHD at 231-995-6051 or visit the MDHHS [Michigan Emerging Disease – Rabies](#) resource page.

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