

# Vital signs™

CDC

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## Rabies: A Forgotten Killer

Vital Signs – June 2019

- Could you be at risk for rabies?
- Rabies is a virus that infects wildlife, especially bats, raccoons, foxes, and skunks in the US.
- It can spread to people and pets when they are bitten or scratched, causing fever, agitation, and death.
- Every 10 minutes, someone in the US is treated for possible exposure to rabies.
- About 5,000 animals— mostly wildlife— test positive for rabies each year in the US.
- While deadly, rabies is 100% preventable with post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP) that includes rabies vaccine and medications...
- ...but only if people get PEP **before** symptoms start.
- Understanding the risk and knowing what to do after contact with wildlife can save lives.
- What can the public, international travelers, and healthcare providers do to prevent rabies?
- Find answers at [www.cdc.gov/vitalsigns](http://www.cdc.gov/vitalsigns)