

NEWS RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Health Department urges residents to be aware of bats

The Lawrence-Douglas County Health Department has received an increased number of calls regarding bats this summer. If residents see a bat — dead or alive — inside a home or an apartment, it is important to contact the Health Department at 785-843-0721 and ask for a Communicable Disease nurse for guidance.

Bats have small teeth that may leave marks not easily seen. Although many people know if a bat has bitten them, there are certain circumstances when a person might not be aware or able to tell if a bite has occurred. For example:

- If a person awakes to find a bat in the room
- If you find a bat in a room with an unattended child
- If you see a bat near a person with a disability
- If a person is intoxicated

When it cannot be ruled out that the bat is free from rabies and an exposure has occurred, a series of vaccinations can prevent infection. It is important to get these vaccinations as soon as possible after exposure because rabies is a fatal disease.

“The most common way for people in the United States to get rabies is through contact with a bat,” Kim Ens, director of Clinic Services at the Health Department, said. “We can’t emphasize enough the importance of capturing the bat, having the bat tested and seeking medical advice.”

About the Lawrence-Douglas County Health Department

The Lawrence-Douglas County Health Department has served the Lawrence and Douglas County community for more than 120 years. Its mission is to advance policies, practices and programs that promote health for all, prevent disease and protect the environment.

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