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*“Working towards a healthy and safe Putnam County”*

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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Date:** 9/2/2025

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## Bat Tests Positive for Rabies

A bat in Putnam County has tested positive for rabies. Testing was performed at the Ohio Department of Health (ODH) Public Health Laboratory. The Putnam County Health Department routinely follows up on possible exposures from wild and domestic animals.

Rabies is a viral disease of the central nervous system that is almost always fatal once symptoms appear, but it can be prevented by prompt medical treatment following exposure. The rabies virus attacks the nerves and brain tissue in animals. Sick animals spread the virus to humans and other animals through their saliva or brain or nervous system tissue. Humans and other animals are exposed to the rabies virus when they are either bitten or scratched by an infected animal.

Unfortunately, you cannot tell if a bat has rabies by looking at it. Rabies must be confirmed in a laboratory by testing brain tissue. Most rabies cases are found in wildlife, such as skunks, raccoons and bats.

The following steps can help keep you and your pets safe:

- Keep your pets up-to-date on their rabies vaccination and consult your veterinarian if they are exposed to wild animals.
- Close any openings of your home to prevent bats from entering.
- Do not touch, feed or attract wild animals with feeders or open garbage cans.
- Never adopt or care for wild animals or bring them into your home.
- If you are bitten, scratched or otherwise exposed to an animal, consult your healthcare provider for guidance and report the incident to your local health department.

For more information about rabies, visit the [www.odh.ohio.gov/rabies](http://www.odh.ohio.gov/rabies) or call the Putnam County Health Department at 419-523-5608.

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