



## For immediate Release

### The One Health Commission supports Bat Rabies Education in the Americas

One Health is a very old concept being resurrected in the past 15 years to encourage awareness of the inextricable interconnectedness between humans, animals and the environment. The [One Health Commission](#), a non-profit organization, supports One Health Action Teams that identify and try to address gaps in awareness and education about issues that fall at the intersection of these sectors. One example is the Bat Rabies Education Team (BRET) which promotes a critical message to prevent the spread of Rabies in the Americas: Never Touch a Bat. [Educational posters](#) have been developed in partnership with the Global Alliance for Rabies Control and Bat Conservation International (in [English](#), [Portuguese](#) and [Spanish](#)) and are available free for anyone to download and print for educational purposes. [https://www.onehealthcommission.org/en/one\\_health\\_resources/bat\\_rabies\\_education/](https://www.onehealthcommission.org/en/one_health_resources/bat_rabies_education/)

Rabies is a deadly yet preventable zoonotic disease that can be transmitted to people by infected mammals. Not all bats have rabies, but in the few cases of rabies transmission in North America, most come from bats. Bats are fascinating and unique creatures that contribute tremendously to the balance of natural ecosystems. As an important component of the environment, they should not be harmed. Yet bats should never be casually handled. Bats infected with rabies 'may' exhibit unusual behaviors, such as daytime activity, no fear of people, inability to fly, flopping on the ground, or making unusual noises such as hissing. But they may also show no outward signs. Do not touch a bat; if you can get close enough to touch a bat, it may be ill. Instead, contact your local animal control officer.

Bats are sometimes found in homes or utility buildings and direct contact with humans does occur. Bat bites and scratches can be very inconspicuous and can easily go unnoticed. If a bat is found in a home or building, contact local animal control for removal. Additionally, contact your local public health department or health professional for guidance about potential human exposure. Timing is critical in these situations, so act quickly.

Pets should have rabies vaccines kept up-to-date at all times to protect both pets and people. Pets that do not have current rabies vaccines and that come into contact with rabid animals can face extensive and expensive quarantine periods or even euthanasia.

A Global One Health Day is being celebrated for the first time this year on November 3 and offers an opportunity for organizations everywhere to educate about One Health and One Health issues such as bat rabies. Individuals and organizations are encouraged to help the One Health Commission Bat Rabies Education Team spread this message by planning and implementing a One Health Day event focused on Bat Rabies Education and awareness. More information about bat rabies and BRET can be found at: [https://www.onehealthcommission.org/en/one\\_health\\_resources/bat\\_rabies\\_education/](https://www.onehealthcommission.org/en/one_health_resources/bat_rabies_education/) More information about One Health Day can be found at: [https://www.onehealthcommission.org/en/eventsalendar/one\\_health\\_day/](https://www.onehealthcommission.org/en/eventsalendar/one_health_day/)

#### Contact information:

Cheryl M. Stroud, DVM, PhD  
Executive Director, One Health Commission  
P.O. Box 972  
Apex, NC 27523 (USA)  
[cstroud@onehealthcommission.org](mailto:cstroud@onehealthcommission.org)  
224-622-1839