



RABIES CHECKLIST

FACT: Rabies has the highest mortality rate—99.9%—of any disease on earth.

Here are some common-sense rules to avoid getting rabies:

- Make sure your own pets are current with their rabies vaccination.
It is a NM state statute as well as both city and county ordinances. It's estimated that 90%-95% of dogs and cats in Las Vegas and San Miguel County do not have the required rabies vaccinations.
- Never pet a stray dog or cat.
- Never touch a wild animal—even if it looks dead.
- If you see a stray animal or animal acting strangely (especially if it is aggressive or tries to bite you), call local animal control to safely remove it. Keep track of when you called and who you talked to.

Las Vegas City Police at (505) 425-7504

San Miguel Sheriff's Office at (505) 425-7589

If you are bit by a dog, cat, or bat do the following:

- Photograph the bite wound area and, if possible, photograph or video the animal. This will help with capture, symptom identification, and diagnosis.
- Immediately wash the bite area thoroughly with soap and water and cover with a clean bandage.
- Find out the animal's guardian contact information if possible.
- Call animal control to report the bite and if you can identify the animal, insist the animal be quarantined for observation for ten days. Insist that a police report be made and pick up a copy of the police report for your records.

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- Call the local Department of Health to report the bite and to receive advice:
Department of Health (505) 425-9368
- Call your local doctor and go to the nearest emergency room for treatment. Your doctor may recommend you have a tetanus shot. The tetanus shot would help protect you from common infections transmitted by animal bites but **will not** protect you from rabies.
- If you cannot identify the animal and it therefore cannot be quarantined for observation, your doctor may recommend that you undergo the rabies postexposure prophylaxis series of shots to protect yourself from developing rabies. **DO NOT WAIT TO SEEK MEDICAL CARE. Once symptoms develop, this disease is fatal!**

For more detailed information contact the New Mexico Department of Health reporting and surveillance hotline at **(505) 827-0006** and read more about rabies on their website:

<https://www.nmhealth.org/about/erd/ideb/zdp/rab/>

If you enjoy listening to podcasts [Radiolab](https://radiolab.org) has an excellent episode on rabies titled "[Rodney Versus Death](https://radiolab.org/podcast/312245-rodney-versus-death)": <https://radiolab.org/podcast/312245-rodney-versus-death>

As of July 25 2023, the NM Dept of Health reports there have been seven [Animal Rabies Cases in New Mexico in 2023](#): two skunks from De Baca County, a fox from Sierra County, a bat from Eddy County, two more Bats from San Miguel County and one Bat from Lincoln County. For comparison, there were eleven [Animal Rabies Cases in New Mexico in 2022](#)