What Should You Do If You Have Contact with a Bat?

If a person or pet has had contact with a bat, it is important to catch the bat for testing so proper treatment can be obtained. First, determine if contact has been made, such as by a bite, scratch, or other physical contact, or if saliva from the bat has entered eyes, nose, mouth, or open cuts on people or animals.

To Capture a Bat:

1. Close all windows and doors of the room the bat is in and turn on the lights if the room is dark.

2. Wait for the bat to land on a surface.

3. Wearing thick, preferably leather, gloves, cover the bat with a coffee can or similar container that has a lid.

4. Slide a piece of cardboard under the overturned can, trapping the bat in the can.

5. With one hand firmly holding the cardboard in place against the opening of the can, turn the can right side up with the bat inside.

6. Replace the cardboard with the lid. If no lid is present, tape the cardboard tightly to the can.

7. Immediately contact Steuben County Public Health or your local county health department to determine the next steps.

Call Steuben County Public Health and ask for the Public Health Nurse:

607-664-2438
Monday - Friday, 8:30 am - 5:00 pm

800-836-4444
Weekends or after hours

If there is no possibility of human or animal contact with the bat, the bat does not need to be captured. To allow a bat to leave a home, close the room and closet doors, open windows, turn on a light, and observe the bat until it leaves. Be sure to close the windows once the bat has left.