

# **BATS in Queen's Buildings**

## **Don't touch bats!**

Bats can be a source of rabies transmission to humans. Although bat rabies is rare in our area, it is present and is an extremely serious hazard.

Rabies virus can cause an acute infection, marked by progressive encephalomyelitis leading to death. Almost all cases of clinical rabies in humans are fatal. It is therefore important to avoid infection by avoiding contact with bats and by appropriate first aid and medical follow-up if contact does occur.

NEVER attempt to capture a bat. This will put you at unnecessary risk of getting bit or scratched.

- **If you have had direct exposure to a bat while working at Queen's (i.e. a bite or scratch):**
  - Immediately wash the wound thoroughly with soap and water, followed by 70% ethanol or iodine disinfectant if available.
  - DO NOT attempt to capture the bat yourself, but isolate it if possible (e.g. by closing doors)! Have someone call the Department of Environmental Health and Safety (32999) to deal with the bat, informing them that there has been a human contact incident. If the bat can be captured then it will be sent for rabies testing.
  - Go to Kingston General Hospital Emergency department for medical follow-up. Direct exposure to a bat bite or scratch MAY warrant post-exposure treatment. Anti-rabies immunoglobulin and an anti-rabies immunization may be administered to prevent infection.
  - Monitoring for symptoms is inadequate since, by the time symptoms are apparent, rabies is invariably fatal.
  
- **If you find a bat in a building at Queen's**, avoid contact, but attempt to isolate it in a room if possible (e.g. by closing doors). Call the Department of Environmental Health and safety (32999) or your building manager who will arrange for a pest control company to capture and remove it.
  
- **If you find a dead bat**, testing of the bat may be done to determine if it is infected with rabies. Wear heavy gloves and use tongs or a shovel to pick up the bat and put it into a container. If you do not have the appropriate equipment, call the Department of Environmental Health and Safety for assistance. EH&S will pick up the bat and arrange disposal or testing for rabies as appropriate.
  
- **If you find an injured or sick bat**, call EH&S (32999)