

# Australian Bat Lyssavirus (ABLV)

## Information for people who have found a sick or injured bat

### What to do if you find a sick or injured bat

Only trained and vaccinated people should handle bats. If you find a sick, injured or distressed bat, **do not touch the bat**. Contact the RSPCA on 1300 ANIMAL (1900 264625) or a bat care organisation in your local area (do a search for 'bat care').

Any bat in Australia may be infectious with Australian bat lyssavirus regardless of the age or type of bat, or how healthy it looks.

If anyone has been bitten, scratched, had their skin nibbled or had their mucous membranes (eyes, inside the nose or mouth) or broken skin exposed to bat saliva they require immediate medical assessment.

Even if you have minor scratches or abrasions from a bat, with or without bleeding, seek medical assessment as soon as possible.

If you have had exposure to a bat (as listed above), you may require a series of rabies vaccine injections to protect against Australian bat lyssavirus, even if you have been previously vaccinated. You may also need a tetanus vaccination. Your local doctor should consult the nearest Public Health Unit who will advise the number of rabies vaccines needed.

### What to do if you or anyone has been bitten or scratched or had mucous membrane exposure to bat saliva from this or any other bat:

**Immediately** wash the wound gently but thoroughly for at least 15 minutes with soap and water to reduce the risk of infection.

**Do not scrub the wound.**

Apply an antiseptic to the wound after washing. The best type is one that contains povidine-iodine or alcohol (ethanol).

If your eyes, nose or mouth have been exposed, flush the area thoroughly with water.

**Seek medical attention as soon as possible** for the wound and to assess whether you are at risk of infection.

While bat faeces, urine and blood are not considered to pose a risk of ABLV, contact with any bat fluids should generally be avoided. If you have contact with bat fluids, wash your hands (or other affected areas) immediately.

If you think you have been exposed, or for further information, please contact your local doctor or nearest [Public Health Unit](#) or the 13HEALTH (13 432584) information line.

## What to do if your pet has been bitten or scratched by this or any other bat:

- Contact your local veterinarian if you suspect your pet might have been bitten or scratched by a bat.
- Further information is available from Biosecurity Queensland: [Australian bat lyssavirus](#)