

Human Rabies Cases Related to Bats in the United States

The following information was most recently updated on March 13, 2008.
Current bat rabies statistics can be found on the BCI website at: www.batcon.org

PUBLISHED STATISTICS THROUGH MARCH 2008:

- 53 cases **confirmed** as a result of bat rabies.
- 51 deaths* **confirmed** as a result of bat rabies in the past 56 years (since 1951). An average of less than one death per year.

**Of the 51 confirmed deaths, 4 contracted rabies through organ transplants.*

Because many cases were post-mortem or late moribund diagnoses, exposure histories could not be obtained from the patients. The most likely explanation for these cases is an unreported bite.

Year	Location(s)	Patient(s)	Bat Variant	Comments
2007	MN	46-year-old male	Unknown	Man bitten by bat, but did not seek treatment.
2006	IN	10-year-old female	Silver-haired bat	Child bitten on arm by bat, but did not seek treatment.
2006	TX	teenage male	Mexican Free-tailed	Bat found in bedroom captured and released. Likely but NOT YET CONFIRMED as bat rabies.
2005	MS	10-year-old male	Unknown	Patient removed a live bat from his bedroom and released it outside. Although possible, Medical professionals were NOT ABLE TO CONFIRM this as bat rabies.
2004	WI	15-year-old female	Unknown	Patient bitten by sick bat she handled (SURVIVED).
2004	AL	male	Mexican Free-tailed	Organ recipient from rabies infected AK man (lungs)-died on operating table, NOT ACTUAL RABIES CASE/DEATH
2004	AR,AL,OK,TX	multiple	Mexican Free-tailed	Organ recipients from AR donor
2004	AR	20-year-old male	Unknown	Patient bitten by bat but did not seek treatment.
2003	CA	66-year-old male	Silver-haired	Patient bitten by bat but did not seek treatment.
2002	IA	20-year-old male	Silver-haired/Eastern Pipistrelle	No known contact.
2002	TN	13-year-old male	Silver-haired/Eastern Pipistrelle	Patient too ill to be questioned about exposure history, but family reported that he had found a sick bat on the ground and took it home.
2002	CA	28-year-old male	Mexican Free-tailed	Patient comatose before rabies diagnosis made. Patient had killed a bat in his house earlier that month
2000	WI	69-year-old male	Silver-haired/Eastern Pipistrelle	Post-mortem diagnosis. Friend said he had removed bats from his house with bare hands.
2000	MN	47-year-old male	Silver-haired	Patient too ill to provide information regarding exposure history. Friend reported patient was bitten when killing a bat.
2000	GA	26-year-old male	Mexican Free-tailed	Post-mortem diagnosis. Co-workers reported a bat had landed on him while he slept.
2000	CA	49-year-old male	Mexican Free-tailed	Patient too ill to provide information regarding possible exposure history. Patient did not report contact with bat, but wife reported he had caught and removed bat from house.
1998	VI	29-year-old male	Silver-haired/Eastern Pipistrelle	Patient too ill to provide information regarding possible exposure history. Patient was prison inmate who repaired fences and fed cattle, worked in paper recycling facility and along roadsides cleaning up trash and debris.

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1997	NJ	32-year-old male	Silver-haired/Eastern Pipistrelle	On two separate occasions, patient captured bats in home by hand using a cloth and released them outside. Patient and wife did not recall whether or not he had been bitten.
1997	TX	71-year-old male	Silver-haired/Eastern Pipistrelle	First report involving both victim and wife stated no contact; days later wife changed story to say that bat was found in patient's hotel room and landed on left shoulder.
1997	WA	64-year-old male	Big Brown	Post-mortem diagnosis. Patient apparently not questioned, or too ill to provide information regarding possible exposure history.
1997	MT	65-year-old male	Silver-haired	Post-mortem diagnosis. Family reported bat was in patient's house for several days and that patient often baited traps with killed animals. Patient apparently not questioned, or too ill to provide information regarding possible exposure history.
1996	MT	49-year-old male	Silver-haired	Patient was a lumber mill custodian where bats were observed in area; denied having physical contact with bats.
1996	KY	42-year-old female	Silver-haired/Eastern Pipistrelle	Patient denied history of animal bites.
1995	CA	74-year-old male	Silver-haired	Post-mortem diagnosis. Patient sometimes handled bats; Patient apparently not questioned, or too ill to provide information regarding possible exposure history.
1995	CT	13-year-old female	Silver-haired/Eastern Pipistrelle	Bat found flying in patient's home; patient denied history of animal bites.
1995	CA	27-year-old male	Mexican Free-tailed	Post-mortem diagnosis. A family member believed a bat had landed on patient's chest and been brushed off, but was unable to provide specific details on the incident. Patient apparently not questioned, or too ill to provide information regarding possible exposure history.
1995	WA	4-year-old female	Myotis californicus or M. ciliolabrum	Child apparently too ill to provide information regarding exposure history. Family members reported finding abnormally behaving bat in her bedroom and disposing of it; bat later retrieved and found to be rabid. Per CDC, "This strange behavior should have led to a strong suspicion of rabies."
1994	CA	44-year-old male	Silver-haired	Post-mortem diagnosis. Patient cared for sick kitten that was not checked; patient apparently not questioned, or too ill to provide information regarding possible exposure history.
1994	TN	42-year-old female	Silver-haired/Eastern Pipistrelle	Patient had many (26) unvaccinated pets; denied history of animal bites.
1994	WV	41-year-old male	Silver-haired/Eastern Pipistrelle	Post-mortem diagnosis. Bat described as a possible red bat, but likely was a reddish-colored pipistrelle. Family and friends reported patient shot and handled bat, running his fingers along its teeth. Patient apparently not questioned, or too ill to provide information regarding possible exposure history.
1994	AL	24-year-old female	Mexican Free-tailed	Post-mortem diagnosis. Patient routinely removed dead/dying bats from place of employment.

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1993	TX	82-year-old male	Silver-haired/Eastern Pipistrelle	Patient too ill to provide information regarding potential exposure. Patient was exposed to dying cow 3 months earlier.
1993	NY	11-year-old female	Silver-haired/Eastern Pipistrelle	Post-mortem diagnosis. Caught and caged a possibly sick bat. Report unclear about whether or not patient was ever questioned about potential exposure history.
1991	GA	27-year-old female	Silver-haired/Eastern Pipistrelle	Post-mortem diagnosis. Patient apparently not questioned, or too ill to provide information regarding possible exposure history.
1991	AR	29-year-old male	Silver-haired/Eastern Pipistrelle	Friends reported him bitten while catching and killing an abnormally behaving bat. Report unclear about whether or not patient was ever questioned about potential exposure history.
1990	TX	22-year-old male	Mexican Free-tailed	Bitten while tormenting bat and did not seek medical attention
1984	PA	12-year-old male	Myotis (probably <i>M. leibii</i>)	Report unclear as to patient's coherence during questioning or who was questioned regarding potential exposure history.
1983	MI	5-year-old female	Silver-haired	Patient reported bite to parents.
1979	KY	45-year-old male	Silver-haired/Eastern Pipistrelle	Patient reported no known exposure to potentially rabid animals
1979	OK	24-year-old male	Silver-haired/Eastern Pipistrelle	Patient's occupation was woodcutter; although no exposure was reported, activities prior to illness provided potential for bite exposure. Unclear whether patient was questioned.
1978	ID	37-year-old female	Silver-haired	Apparently post-mortem diagnosis. Rabies contracted through corneal transplant.
1978	OR	39-year-old male	Isolate unavailable	(Donor for Idaho case above.) Post-mortem diagnosis. Patient not questioned; he was a professional lumberman and avid trapper.
1976	MD	55-year-old female	Silver-haired/Eastern Pipistrelle	Bitten on the hand by a bat reported as a Big brown bat. Patient vaccinated forty-four hours after bitten, but died anyway. Postmortem findings suggested possibility of post-vaccine reaction from duck-embryo vaccine, direct viral infection, or both.
1973	KY	26-year-old male	Silver-haired/Eastern Pipistrelle	Patient was aware of being bitten on the ear by a bat while in bed; bat not recovered and patient did not seek medical attention.
1971	NJ	64-year-old male	Species not reported	Man reported being bitten on mouth by abnormally behaving bat while on his porch; bat not recovered but he was given duck-embryo vaccine.
1970	OH	6-year-old male	Big Brown	Boy bitten on hand while asleep. Bat tested positive for rabies. Patient vaccinated with duck-embryo vaccine. Patient then exhibited signs of rabies and survived. (SURVIVED)
1959	WI	44-year-old male	Species not reported	Man reported being bitten on ear by bat while asleep; killed and disposed of bat without testing.
1959	CA	53-year-old male	Mexican Free-tailed	Alleged aerosol Texas caves. Patient denied history of animal bite but a Friend reported seeing blood on his face he presumed to have been from a bat bite while in Frio Cave.
1958	CA	53-year-old female	Silver-haired	Woman reported being bitten while handling abnormally behaving Silver-haired bat. Bat later tested positive for rabies; vaccinations not begun until one month after bite.

Year	Location(s)	Patient(s)	Bat Variant	Comments
1956	TX	38-year-old male	Mexican Free-tailed	Alleged aerosol from Texas caves. Patient denied history of animal bite but was a State rabies investigator and had handled thousands of bats.
1951	TX	43-year-old female	Species not reported	Post-mortem diagnosis. Woman bitten while handling sick bat she picked up off the road.