I think we can all agree- bats are creepy— but they aren’t all bad- They pollinate some of our favorite fruits and they eat their body weight in insects each night!

They’d rather stay away from people, but they do sometimes get into our homes and that’s when we need to be cautious because they are among the most common animals in MI to transmit rabies, a disease which attacks the brain and can be fatal if left untreated.

There are a several instances where you might need to catch a bat in case it needs to be tested for rabies…….If you are bitten by a bat or if a bat is found near a sleeping person, someone who is intoxicated, a child, or a mentally impaired person

Catching a bat isn’t as hard as you may think:

* Grab a pair of gloves, a small box or coffee can, a piece of cardboard, and tape
* When the bat lands, approach it slowly
* Place the box or coffee can over the bat and slide the cardboard under the container to trap the bat inside.
* Then, tape the cardboard securely to the container.
* Keep in mind that in order to be tested a bat’s head must remain intact, so no hitting it with a tennis racket or baseball bat!
* To see a video demonstration on a safe bat capture, visit our website at [www.mmdhd.org](http://www.mmdhd.org)
* Once you have capture the bat, contact MMDHD at 989-831-3615 to find out if the bat needs to be tested.

If you are bitten by a bat, immediately wash the wound with water/iodine which has been shown to reduce the likelihood of rabies. Then, call your doctor to see if you need to be tested for rabies. If the bat does have rabies you can be treated with a postexposure vaccination.

How can you prevent bats from getting into your home?

* Replace loose soffits, flashings, eaves, and siding
* Cover roof vents with screens
* Make sure all doors shut tightly with no gaps
* Make sure window screens aren’t damaged or torn.

If time:

Rabies symptoms:

Early symptoms: fever, headache, weakness, discomfort

As disease progresses: insomnia, anxiety, confusion, paralysis, hallucinations, leads to death within a few days of onset of symptoms