

# Massachusetts Department of Public Health (MDPH)

## Species Considerations For Rabies Testing

### Category 1

**ALWAYS** test following human or domestic animal exposure

Species in this group are either known rabies vectors or are considered likely to have the potential to transmit rabies.

**Bat**  
**Bear**  
**Beaver**  
**Bobcat**  
**Coyote**  
**Fisher**  
**Fox**  
**Otter**  
**Raccoon**  
**Skunk**  
**Woodchuck**

### Category 2

Test following human or domestic animal exposure if 10-day quarantine is not possible or not appropriate (i.e., animal is already ill)

Species in this group can only transmit rabies up to 10 days before showing symptoms.

**Cat**  
**Cow**  
**Dog**  
**Ferret**

### Category 3

Requires MDPH or MDAR\* approval for testing (handled case by case)

Species in this group are occasionally found to be rabid although bites from these animals have never resulted in a human case of rabies in the United States.

**Alpaca/llama**  
**Chinchilla**  
**Deer**  
**Domestic/pet rabbit**  
**Goat**  
**Guinea pig**  
**Horse**  
**Mink**  
**Moose**  
**Muskrat**  
**Opossum**  
**Pig**  
**Porcupine**  
**Sheep**  
**Squirrel**  
**Weasel**

### Category 4

Rabies testing NOT indicated

Species in this group are virtually never found to be rabid and bites from these animals have never resulted in a human case of rabies in the United States.

**Chipmunk**  
**Gerbil**  
**Hamster**  
**Mole**  
**Mouse**  
**Rat**  
**Shrew**  
**Vole**  
**Wild rabbit/  
Cottontail**

For exposures involving an animal species not specifically listed OR unusual circumstances, consultation with the Massachusetts Department of Public Health Division of Epidemiology and Immunization is available 24/7 at 617-983-6800.

\*Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources: 617-626-1810