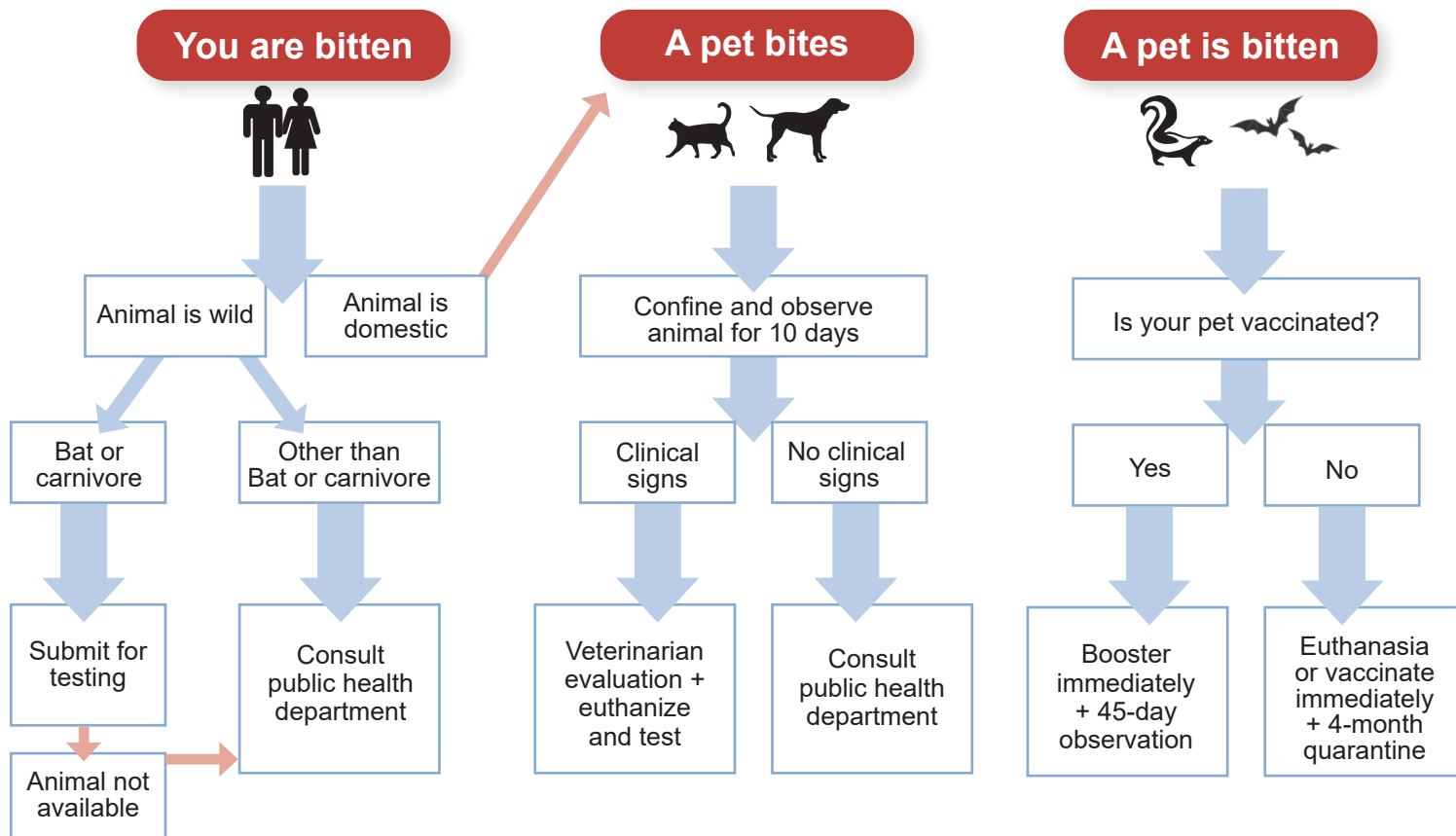


Rabies Guide



For the public



FAQs



More Questions?

Contact your health department
Zoonotic Disease Section

Phone: (501) 661-2381; Email: adh.zoonotic@Arkansas.gov

What is rabies?

Rabies is a disease transmitted from animal to humans, which is caused by a virus.

How is rabies transmitted?

Rabies virus invades the nervous system of mammals. It is primarily transmitted from the rabid animal's saliva when it bites or scratches someone, licks to wounds or grazed and broken skin, or to the lining of the eyes, mouth or nose.

How does one treat an animal bite?

Wounds should be washed and flushed immediately with soap and water for 1–15 minutes. If soap is not available, flush with water alone. This is the most effective first-aid treatment against rabies. Wounds should be cleaned thoroughly with 70% alcohol/ethanol or povidone-iodine, if available. As soon as possible, take the person to a healthcare facility for further treatment.

Do all animal bite victims require rabies shots?

Not all animal bite victims need rabies shots afterwards. When bitten by a healthy dog or cat, it is usually safe to wait a period of time (10 days) to observe the animal for signs of rabies illness first. If the dog or cat becomes ill and/or dies within this time, it must be tested for rabies and the person should be evaluated by a healthcare provider to determine their risk and need for rabies shots.

Where should I direct human health concerns after exposure?

Individuals should be directed to speak with their physician.

How do I submit an animal for testing?

See <https://www.healthy.arkansas.gov/programs-services/topics/rabies-testing>