



## City residents told to take precautions after person bitten by rabid raccoon

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Raccoon (Credit: Thinkstock)

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RICHMOND, Va. — The Richmond City Health District is reminding residents to take precautions to reduce the risk of people or pets contracting rabies from domestic or woodland animals.

This comes after a person was recently bitten by a raccoon that has tested positive for rabies. The raccoon was picked up by Richmond Animal Care and Control on Janaluska Drive in South Richmond.

To prevent animal bites, the public is advised not to approach wild or stray animals either in wooded areas or if they wander onto your property; particularly if the animal is behaving strangely.

Take the following steps to prevent family members and pets from being exposed to rabies:

- Don't attract wild animals into your yard by leaving out pet food or uncontained garbage.
- Vaccinate all cats, dogs and ferrets against rabies and keep their shots up to date.
- Don't allow your pets to roam freely through the neighborhood; keep them on a leash when walking them.
- Report stray animals to your local animal control agency.

According to the Virginia Department of Health, rabies is caused by a virus that attacks the nervous system. The virus is in the saliva of rabid animals and can be transmitted through a bite or by getting infected saliva in the eyes, mucous tissue or an open wound. Rabies can be deadly.

If you or your pet are attacked or bitten, report it to the health department or animal control authorities and, promptly seek medical attention.

If possible (without danger or risk), restrain the animal so that it can be tested, or get a good description of the animal that you can provide to authorities.