



Be a friend to **WILDLIFE**



The health of people is connected to the health of other animals and our environment. Some diseases are shared between people and animals. When we keep wildlife healthy, we also keep people healthy.

As our city population grows and expands into previously rural areas, more residents live in closer contact with wildlife. The disruption of wildlife habitats enables the exchange of diseases between people and animals.

Because people and animals are connected, we can be

affected by the same diseases. These are transmitted by viruses, bacteria, and parasites. Although it happens very rarely, it's possible to pick up diseases from wild animals. It's also possible for us to pass diseases to wild animals.

We're all connected, in sickness and in health

Diseases that can pass between people and animals are called zoonotic. Serious but very rare zoonotic diseases include:

- Plague, passed by fleas to rodents.
- Tularemia, passed by ticks and deer flies to rabbits and rodents.
- Hantavirus, passed through a virus in rodent urine, feces, and saliva.
- Rabies, passed through bites from infected bats, foxes, raccoons, and skunks.

These diseases are **extremely rare**, with an average of fewer than 5 cases per year in New Mexico.

How you can prevent the sharing of diseases:

- Keep your distance to avoid physical contact with wild animals.
- Pick up dog poop: dogs can pass diseases to wildlife.
- Don't attract rodents to your property and be cautious in areas populated by rodents.
- Wear insect repellent.
- Vaccinate your pets and protect them from fleas and ticks.

ACTION TIPS

Be a friend to wildlife! Here's what you can do.

TIP #1

Keep your distance from wildlife

- Don't feed or leave food outside for wildlife (except for songbirds, hummingbirds).
- Leave wild animals alone. Don't provoke, harass, or corner wild animals.
- Don't touch or pick up wild animals, even if they look injured or abandoned. If an injury looks serious, report the animal by calling 311.

TIP #2

Practice cleanliness

- Wash your hands with soap and water after spending time in places where wild animals might have been (such as gardens, sheds, cabins, hiking trails).
- Use precautions when working/cleaning in an area with signs of rodent activity.
- Don't touch wildlife or pick up dead animals. Call 311 for advice. If you must remove a dead animal, wear water-resistant gloves, glasses, and a mask, and discard the animal in a sealed double bag.
- Clean up trash, debris, and sources of standing water in your yard.

TIP #3

Make your home and yard rodent-resistant

- Keep trash bins tightly closed and cover your compost.
- Clean up refuse and clutter from your yard, such as piles of litter, wood, and rocks.
- Use rodent-proof, above-ground bird feeders and clean up spilled birdseed.
- Don't feed dogs or cats outside.
- Stack firewood off the ground and away from your house.
- Prevent rodent access to your house and sheds by sealing cracks and crevices and screening windows and doors.

TIP #4

Be prepared for outdoor activities

- Before visiting a new place, learn about its wildlife.
- Stay on trails, follow visitor guidelines, and dispose of trash properly.
- Wear an EPA-registered insect repellent and long-sleeved clothing.
- Bring a first aid kit and water.
- Check yourself and your pets for ticks after being outdoors.

TIP #5

Keep pets and wildlife safe

- Vaccinate your pets. City law requires dogs and cats be vaccinated against rabies, as well as other deadly diseases.
- Leash your dog on walks and hikes.
- Pick up and dispose of dog waste, which can carry diseases.
- Don't let pets interact with, chase, kill, or eat wild animals.
- Ask your veterinarian about flea control products for your pet.

NEED HELP?

Seek medical or veterinary care if you or your pet gets bitten by a wild animal.

Call 311 to report a dead rabbit or rodent on your property when the cause of death is not obvious (no signs of trauma, predation, etc.), but don't touch the animal.

For low- to moderate-income residents, free vaccinations for dogs and cats are available through the Animal Welfare Department. Call 311 to request an appointment.

For more information on coexisting with our Albuquerque wildlife, visit cabq.gov/coexistwithwildlife