

Mosaic from Louis Pasteur's crypt representing the shepherd Jean-Baptiste Jupille (second person ever to be vaccinated against rabies) struggling against a rabid dog.

From the CDC
Public Health Image Library (PHIL)

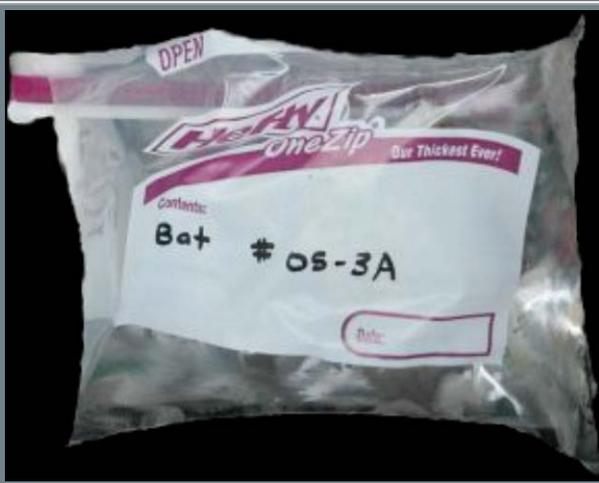
Submitting Rabies Specimens to the DSHS Lab



The laboratory accepts only animal heads, with exceptions for very small rodents such as bats, rats, and mice. Whole bats are preferred to allow the Lab to speciate the bats. Do not submit live animals.

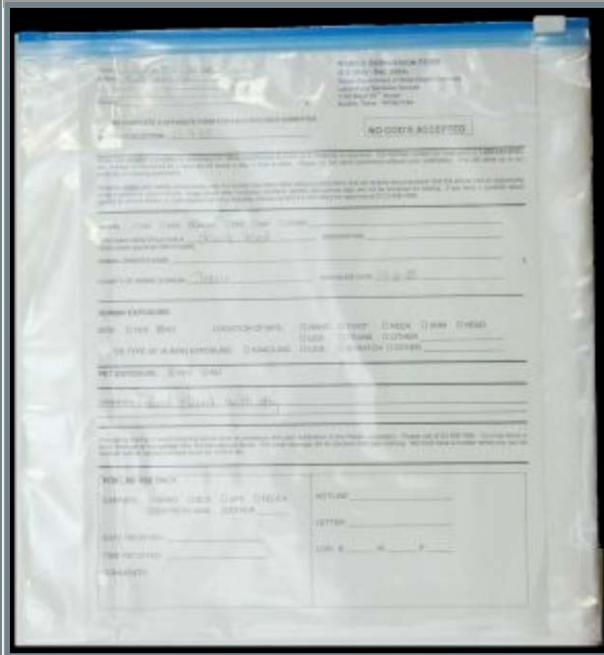
If you are submitting an animal head for testing, have a qualified person separate the animal head from the body immediately after death. Avoid damage to the brain, as it may compromise the test.

Immediately chill the specimen to between 32° F and 45° F. **Do not freeze**; freezing makes the specimen difficult to necropsy and may invalidate the test.



Place one specimen in double zip-lock bags or – for larger animal heads – in two appropriately sized plastic bags. Seal these bags securely to prevent leakage.

Attach an identification number or name to the outside of each double-sealed plastic bag. This is especially important if more than one specimen is sent in a package.



Place a completed Rabies Submission Form (G-9) for each specimen in a separate double plastic bag. This keeps the form dry.

The identification information on the form must match the identification information on the specimen.



Obtain an insulated container strong enough to withstand shipment, for example a Styrofoam box nested inside a cardboard box.

Line the bottom and sides of the Styrofoam box with absorbent packing material such as newspaper to cushion the specimen(s).

Styrofoam peanuts are not recommended.



Place the specimen(s) into the container. Surround the specimens with refrigerant. Use sufficient refrigerant to ensure that the specimen(s) will remain chilled for at least 48 hours. Do not use dry ice!



Gel packs or similar refrigerants are recommended.

Ice is not recommended. If ice must be used, double bag in heavy-duty Zip-lock bags to prevent leakage.



Place additional absorbent packing material on top, and then seal the inner container.



Place the submission form(s) on top of the specimen container, immediately below the outer box top.

Seal the outer container.



Label the outside of the shipping container as follows:

**Texas Department of State Health Services
Laboratory Services Section
1100 W. 49th Street
Austin, Texas 78756-3194**

**Attn: Letha Zuckero, Rabies Identification Team
512-776-7595**

**Biological Substance, Category B
REFRIGERATE ON ARRIVAL**

Attach a diamond shaped UN3373 label near the address.

Include the name and address of the submitter as the return address on the shipping container.



Call the toll-free Rabies Hotline:

1-800-252-8163

Provide information and expected arrival time.

This is required by state law.

This number is available 24 hours a day and allows submitters to leave the shipping information in a message.

This notification is critical for the laboratory to monitor the arrival of specimens and to be able to notify the submitter if a specimen does not arrive as expected.



During the week, specimens may be shipped by bus or overnight courier. After hours or on weekends or holidays, shipping overnight is discouraged. No one is designated to receive deliveries, so those services frequently hold the package for delivery on Monday or the next regular workday. It would be better to chill the specimen over the weekend, at 32°F to 45°F, and ship it on the next regular workday.

Shipping by bus is the preferred method for weekend or holiday delivery. Specimens are picked up at the bus station each day and kept refrigerated at the laboratory.



Submitters may contact the rabies laboratory at 512-776-7595. When calling to check on results or specimen status, or to arrange special handling, please have as much of the following information available as possible:

- Agency that submitted the animal
- City and/or county from which the animal was shipped
- Type of animal
- Identifying number or description that may have been included with the animal
- Owner and/or victim's name.
- The approximate shipment date

This information will help us identify the animal and respond to questions more quickly.



Remember:

- Chill the specimen to between 32° F and 45° F. Do not freeze.
- Submit a completed Rabies Submission Form (G-9) for each specimen.
- Pack the specimen(s) in a double container. Line the inner container with newspaper, or other absorbent packing material.
- Use gel packs or similar refrigerants for shipping. Do not use dry ice.
- Call the toll-free Rabies Hotline at 1-800-252-8163 with information and expected arrival time.
- For weekend or holiday delivery, shipping by bus is preferred.