

Subject: Veterinary Alert: Rabies on LI

Date: Saturday, February 14, 2026 at 11:00:35 AM Eastern Standard Time

From: LIVMA

To: davehen@optonline.net



Update **Veterinary Health Alert:** **Rabies in Suffolk County**

Please review and share with your staff and clients

From The Suffolk County Department of Health

Dear LIVMA Members,

As you may be aware, there is an ongoing outbreak of terrestrial rabies in Suffolk County, and the Department is asking for your help to report all animal bites and potential rabies exposures. When you are made aware of any such exposure, please do the following:

- A human that was bit/scratched/exposed to a wild or domestic animal in Suffolk County
 - Contact the Suffolk County Public Health Nurses at 631-854-0333 (After hours call 631-852-4820)
- A pet that was bit/scratched/exposed to a wild animal in Suffolk County
 - Contact the Suffolk County Bureau of Public Health Protection at 631-852-5999 (After hours call 631-852-4820)

The Department will follow up with the individuals to determine the potential risk of rabies transmission and discuss treatment.

Terrestrial rabies is not endemic to Long Island and can spread rapidly if left unchecked, posing a threat to people, pets, and wildlife. Terrestrial rabies first re-emerged in Nassau County in 2024 when a feral cat tested positive for the virus. Suffolk County followed in February of 2025 when a raccoon tested positive, the first positive terrestrial rabies sample in Suffolk since 2009. The Suffolk County Department of Health Services has since increased rabies surveillance by drastically increasing the number of animals tested for rabies, with a focus on raccoons. As of February 11, 2026, twenty raccoons have tested positive for rabies along with two cats. All positive samples have been limited to the Town of Babylon.

Along with increased surveillance, the County established an oral rabies vaccine (ORV) program with the assistance of the USDA. In September 2025, over 240,000 oral rabies baits were distributed throughout the four western towns of Babylon, Huntington, Islip, and Smithtown with the goal to stop the spread of terrestrial rabies and to eventually eliminate it completely once contained. ORV bait distribution is expected to continue in the fall of 2026.

The rabies virus is fatal if untreated, making the reporting of any human/pet exposure pivotal. In the first week of February 2026, a Suffolk County veterinarian reported that a member of the public was bitten by a severely neurological outdoor cat visiting the office but left the practice without resolving any treatments. The veterinarian learned that the cat passed away shortly after the visit and immediately contacted the Department to report the exposure. The cat tested positive for the rabies virus, and the individual has since started post-exposure treatment. Prior to speaking to the Department, the individual had no concern over the cat bite and would not have sought medical treatment. The vet who contacted the Department quite possibly saved this individual's life.

Please feel free to contact the Bureau of Public Health Protection with any questions you may have. Thank you all for your anticipated assistance.

Christopher Kandell
Associate Public Health Sanitarian
Suffolk County Dept. of Health Services
Bureau of Public Health Protection
360 Yaphank Ave, Suite 2A
Yaphank, NY 11980
Phone: (631) 852-5864

**Occupational & Environmental Medicine of
Long Island offering Rabies Titer Tests &
Rabies Vaccines**

While LIVMA does not endorse one medical provider over another, if you or your staff are in need of either a Rabies Titer Test or Rabies Vaccine you can contact ***Occupational & Environmental Medicine of Long Island*** where their Board-certified physicians provide consultation services for a wide spectrum of occupational and environmental injuries and exposures.

COSTS:

Rabies vaccines: \$410.00 per vaccine.

Rabies Titer: \$122.00

CONTACT: Jennifer Murphy - Manager Operations

Cell: 516-232-7368 **Email:** jmurphy5@nshs.edu

-- They do not process the vaccine or titer through insurance. An itemized bill is given to the patient, who in turn submits the charge/and or charges to their insurance company.

-- Payment is due at the time of service.

-- Accept only credit card payment.

-- Do not accept walk-in appointments because the vaccines need to be ordered.

Two locations:

225 Community Drive, Suite 150
Great Neck, NY 11021
(516) 492-3297

2950 Expressway Drive South, Suite 108
Islandia, NY 11749
631-439-5300

LIVMA | www.livma.org

LIVMA | PO Box 327 | Garden City, NY 11530 US

[Unsubscribe](#) | [Update Profile](#) | [Constant Contact Data Notice](#)