2008 Georgia Data Summary: RABIES

- Georgia has been identified as having a high endemicity of rabies in wild animals (e.g., raccoons, skunks, foxes, bats) and a low endemicity in domestic animals (e.g., cats, dogs, livestock).
- In the Southeastern United States, the primary reservoir of rabies is the raccoon. Both raccoon and bat variants of the rabies virus have been found in Georgia.
- In 2008, 2595 animal specimens were laboratory tested for rabies. Three hundred and eighty-five (14.8%) tested positive.
- Of the 159 counties in Georgia, 148 submitted animal specimens for rabies testing. Ninety-nine counties were found to have at least one positive animal rabies case.
Wild animals accounted for 94.5% of positive animal rabies cases in 2008, with raccoons comprising over 60% of rabid animals.

Domestic animals accounted for only 5.5% of positive rabies cases.

There have been no human rabies cases reported in Georgia since 2000.

Animal bites are considered a notifiable condition in Georgia and should be reported to Public Health within 24 hours.