

Animal Rabies Testing Resources in Iowa

Specimen Preservation:

If the specimen will not be submitted for testing immediately, it should be refrigerated until transported or shipped.

DO NOT FREEZE THE SPECIMEN

Specimen Transport:

- **Private vehicle is the fastest and preferred way to get the specimen to the laboratory.**
 - Double bag the specimen
 - Place the specimen in a hard sided container, such as a Styrofoam cooler
 - Place ice packs around the double bagged specimen to keep it cool during transport
 - Include the appropriate Rabies Test Request Form from UHL or ISU
 - Call the appropriate laboratory before departure
- **Commercial courier service, such as FedEx, can also be used.**
 - Double bag the specimen
 - Place the double bagged specimen in a hard sided container, such as a Styrofoam cooler.
 - Place ice packs around the double bagged specimen to keep it cool -DO NOT FREEZE.
 - Place the completed Rabies Test Request Form in a separate plastic bag to prevent it from becoming wet or contaminated. Place the bagged Rabies Test Request Form in the hard sided container.
 - Firmly secure the lid of the hard sided container.
 - Package (place in a box) the hard sided container and ship.
 - Ship via **overnight courier.**

NOTE: Improper packaging and/or delayed delivery may compromise the integrity of the brain material rendering the specimen unsatisfactory for testing.

Specimen submission guidelines:

Large/medium animals- If only requesting rabies testing, a veterinarian needs to remove the head and only the head should be submitted for testing*.

Bats- Try not to crush the skull of the bat. Submit the entire animal.

Small animals (mice, squirrels, etc.): Submitting the entire animal is preferred.

***If a veterinarian is requesting other diagnostics from ISU VDL all appropriate samples should also be included. In some cases, this may mean that the entire animal should be submitted.**

Laboratory Contact Information:

UHL:

319-335-4500 or 800-421-4692 (answered all hours)

ISU VDL:

During business hours call 515-294-1950 – after hours call 515-290-1969

For further questions call:
During business hours: **800-362-2736**
After hours: **515-323-4360**



Iowa Department of Public Health,
Center for Acute Disease Epidemiology (CADE)

<http://www.idph.state.ia.us/CADE/DiseaseIndex.aspx?disease=Rabies>
<http://www.cdc.gov/rabies>



<http://www.cfsph.iastate.edu>