

DON'T FEED SQUIRRELS

Squirrels are part of the normal wildlife of DC.

However, our squirrels have lost much of their fear of people unlike other wildlife.

They often approach people for food and when fed may become excited and bite.

While rabies is a concern with any animal bite, squirrels are almost never found to have rabies

No person in the US has ever gotten rabies from a squirrel.

Rabies is a concern if a squirrel is acting **abnormally** when it bites someone.



Normal squirrel behavior in DC:

- Chattering (making noise)
- Chasing and fighting with other squirrels
- Running up and down trees
- Freezing in position on the ground and in trees
- Digging in trash cans
- Adults approaching people for food (if fed by hand this often leads to a bite)
- Young, juvenile squirrels approaching someone out of curiosity or if they are orphaned

Abnormal squirrel behavior in DC:

- Jumping out of a tree to attack a person
- Running at a person and attacking them when not being fed
- Circling or other uncoordinated movements

No matter how a squirrel is behaving, if it bites you should receive a tetanus vaccine if it has been more than five years since your last vaccination. If a squirrel is behaving **abnormally** when it bites you see a physician for a rabies risk assessment right away and call DC Animal Control at **(202) 576-6664**.