

RACCOONS WITH DISTEMPER

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- Raccoons can acquire canine distemper, a viral disease that infects foxes, coyotes, skunks, and unvaccinated dogs. The disease does not affect humans.
- The disease is more likely to occur when raccoon populations are large or concentrated. Wildlife biologists note that it seems to run in cycles of 5-7 years. Not all raccoons get the disease and many do survive these outbreaks.
- The disease is spread when animals have direct contact with body fluids or droppings from an infected animal. Distemper is always present in the environment, so the best prevention for dogs is to make sure they are vaccinated. Contact your vet to make sure your dog's shots are current.
- Symptoms of distemper may include discharge from the nose and eyes, a rough coat of hair, emaciated appearance, and unusual behavior such as disorientation or wandering aimlessly. The animals' symptoms become progressively worse and the disease is usually fatal. Distemper is not the same disease as rabies, although some symptoms are similar. Rabies is extremely rare in Oregon.
- Keep children and pets away from sick raccoons. As the disease progresses, the animal may appear calm, but can become aggressive if approached too closely.
- **To discourage raccoons, remove attractants from your yard.**
 - Feed pets indoors. If you feed outdoors, bring in feeding bowls right after pets have eaten.
 - Make sure garbage cans are secure and can't be knocked over or their lids removed. Put garbage cans in a closed garage or storage shed. You can also secure them by tying them to a stable object or by putting a long stake through the handle and driving it into the ground.
 - If you have a compost pile with fruit and vegetable scraps, make sure compost is securely covered in bins that raccoons can't access.
- Sick raccoons may pass through your yard and move on. If a raccoon dies in your yard, bury it deep enough so pets won't dig it up or call your local garbage disposal company for their recommendations on how to dispose of the animal.
- For current information regarding problem raccoons or for specific questions on raccoons or other wildlife, contact the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife. In the Portland metro area, call 503-657-2000. For ODFW offices outside the Portland area, refer to your local phone directory.

PLEASE DO NOT FEED RACCOONS!

Providing artificial food sources may lead to unnaturally large concentrations of animals and increase the spread of disease.