



AAC Publications

Animal Bite

West Virginia, Bozoo, Iceberg Area

On August 30, Jay Sullivan (56) was bitten by a bat (species unknown) while climbing a short trad route called Playing Hookie (5.7). According to the climber, he was unsure whether he had been bitten or if he had jammed his finger awkwardly into the rock, though he heard “clicking” sounds coming from the crack and noticed a small puncture wound on one finger. He descended and then reclimbed the route with a headlamp, whereupon he identified a bat in the crevice. Returning home later that day, he sought medical advice and received post-exposure prophylaxis for rabies.

ANALYSIS

Rabies is a fatal viral disease that must be treated rapidly if suspected. Bats are a major reservoir of rabies in the United States and abroad. If you suspect a bite or scratch by a bat or mammal that could carry rabies take the following steps: 1) clean the wound thoroughly with copious amounts of water and/or povidone-iodine; 2) seek medical evaluation as soon as possible; 3) begin post-exposure prophylaxis if indicated. (Source: R. Bryan Simon.)

Images

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