



*Toronto Western*  
**Family Health Team**  
*Garrison Creek  
Bathurst*

# TW FHT Newsletter

**Garrison Creek site**

April 2026

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## Clinic Updates & Reminders

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### Saturday Urgent Care Clinics

Garrison Creek site

TW FHT recognizes that urgent medical issues can arise that cannot wait for an appointment with your regular provider.

We have Urgent Care Clinics for URGENT needs after hours. Please visit the TW FHT site where you are enrolled.

**Garrison Creek Urgent Care Clinic**

Saturdays  
9:00 AM to 3:00 PM

Our Saturday Urgent Care Clinic operates on a **walk-in only** basis. Patients are seen in the order they arrive and appointments are not required. We recommend arriving earlier to ensure you can be seen.

In addition, the clinic accepts patients based on volumes and **until daily capacity is reached**. Please expect longer wait times during flu and winter seasons.

[Information About Urgent Care Clinics](#)

[Urgent Care Clinics](#)

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## Charge for Insurance Notes



We wanted to remind patients that a **\$25 fee** is charged for insurance notes requested for services such as physiotherapy, massage, and chiropractic care when they are *requested outside of an appointment* with your primary care provider.

If you request an insurance note during your appointment, there will be no charge. However, if you call to request an insurance note separately, the \$25 fee will apply.

This fee helps manage the administrative burden, as some insurance companies have stopped asking for these notes. If you have any additional questions, please ask your primary care provider.

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## Suicide Crisis Help Line: 9-8-8

Help When You Need it Most

**Thinking of suicide?**  
If you need to talk,  
we're here to listen.

**9-8-8**  
toll free, 24/7

988.ca

If you are feeling like you have lost hope and are struggling to cope, if you are dealing with thoughts of suicide, or if you are worried about someone else, the **9-8-8: Suicide Crisis Helpline** is available to help.

When a person reaches out, a trained responder listens without judgment, offering support and understanding, and can share information about resources that may help.

### **Get Help | 9-8-8: Suicide Crisis Helpline**

You can **call or text 9-8-8**

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## Health Promotion: Health Topics

### Understanding Concussions in Children



Children are active, curious, and always on the move. This is why bumps and falls are a normal part of growing up. Concussions can happen in many everyday situations, but they are especially common during sports and recreational activities.

## What is a concussion?

A concussion is a type of **mild traumatic brain injury** that happens when a bump, blow, or jolt to the head (or even a hit to the body) causes the brain to move quickly back and forth inside the skull.

This sudden movement can lead to changes in how the brain works. Even though concussions are called "mild," they can still have serious effects and need medical attention.

## How can you get a concussion?

Playground or sports injuries are a major reason children visit the emergency room for concussions. The main causes are:

- Falls: Falling from playground equipment (like swings, monkey bars, or slides) onto a hard surface is a very common cause. Safe materials (e.g. woodchips, rubber, sand) should be used to surround playground equipment to prevent hard impacts.
- Collisions: Being struck by or running into another object. This can include bumping heads with another child, running into equipment, or being hit by equipment.

## What are the signs and symptoms of a concussion?

A concussion is diagnosed by observing changes to how your child acts or feels. Concussions cannot be seen on X-rays, CT scans, or MRIs. Symptoms can occur immediately or develop hours after the injury. You do not need to pass out for a concussion to be present.

Possible signs and symptoms include:

- Physical: Headache, dizziness, nausea, vomiting, blurred vision, sensitivity to light or noise, issues with balance, ringing in ears, drowsiness, sleeping more or less than usual
- Mental: Confusion, difficulty concentrating, difficulty remembering, feeling that they are "in a fog", slow

reaction time

- Behavioral: Irritability, sadness, anxiety, changes in personality, and changes to emotional threshold

### **What to do if you suspect your child has a concussion?**

- **Stop the activity**: Have your child stop playing since continuing to play can cause more harm.
- **Seek medical help**: It is important to see a healthcare provider after a head injury to rule out more serious problems and to get advice on recovery.
- **Stay close**: Watch your child closely for 24-48 hours to make sure their symptoms do not worsen.

### **Call 911 if your child experiences any of the following:**

- Loss of consciousness
- Seizures
- Vomiting more than once
- Worsening headache
- Growing confusion
- Double vision
- Neck pain

### **How do you treat a concussion?**

Treatment focuses on resting the brain and managing symptoms.

- Rest is key: recommendations include a short period of rest followed by slowly and gradually returning to activities.
- Medical monitoring: A doctor should monitor your child's symptoms.

## How long does it take to heal?

Recovery requires patience, as rushing back into activities before your child is ready can increase healing time.

- **Time varies:** Recovery time is different for every person. Symptoms often last 10 days to 4 weeks but can last months.
- **Previous concussions:** If your child has had a concussion previously, it can take longer to heal.
- **Promote healing:** You can help by creating a stress-free environment, ensuring they eat a healthy diet, stay hydrated, and maintain a healthy sleep schedule.
- **Limit screens:** Screen time should be limited, as it can put stress on their recovering brain.

### Online Resources:

- [Concussion | Parachute](#)
- [Sport-related concussion: Information for parents, coaches and trainers | Caring for kids](#)
- [What you need to know: concussions | CHEO](#)

Written by Nursing Student Britten Woolley, reviewed by Nurse Patty Rodriguez.

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## Rabies: Prevention and Risks



# Bats and Rabies in Canada

**Bats are critical members of our ecosystem**  
The many bat species that live across Canada play an important role in maintaining a healthy ecosystem, including pest control. **Bats can also transmit diseases like rabies**, so it is important to learn how to **keep yourself, your family and your pets safe!**

**FUN FACT**  
Bats can eat over **70%** of their body weight in disease-causing insects, like mosquitoes, in one night.

**Rabies is a serious but preventable disease**  
Rabies can be transmitted to humans by many wildlife species, including bats. Human infection is rare in Canada but can be deadly if not treated before symptoms begin.

**If you come into contact with a bat, or find one in your house, speak with a healthcare provider right away!**  
Any direct contact with a bat can be a risk for rabies transmission, **even if you can't see a wound.**

**DID YOU KNOW?**  
Bats' teeth and claws are so small that sometimes you can't see their bite or scratch!

**DID YOU KNOW?**  
Pets can also get rabies and could transmit it to humans too! That's why it's important that your pets be vaccinated for rabies! **If your pet catches a bat, contact your veterinarian.**

**Leave bats alone**  
Bats prefer to live in high and tight spaces such as tree cavities, caves, cracks in buildings and even attics of houses. If you know where bats live, stay away from the area to keep yourself, your pets and the bats safe. If you think you have bats in your attic or home, **learn how** to safely remove them and prevent them from coming back.

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(Adapted from [Rabies: Prevention and risks - Canada.ca](https://www.canada.ca/rabies-prevention-and-risks) )

Rabies is a serious viral disease that spreads through the saliva of infected animals, usually through bites or scratches. It is almost always fatal once symptoms appear, so prevention and prompt treatment after exposure are critical.

**Any mammal can be infected with rabies, including:**

*Domestic animals, such as:*

- Dogs, cats and ferrets (both stray or feral and household pets)

- Farm animals, such as horses, cattle and other livestock

*Wild animals, such as:*

- Bats
- Foxes
- Skunks
- Raccoons
- Other wild mammals

**Who is at higher risk of getting rabies:**

- Children, due to more frequent contact with animals and unreported bites.
- People who work closely with animals or wildlife (e.g., veterinarians, animal control, wildlife workers).
- Travellers to regions where rabies is common.

**Ways to reduce the risk of rabies include:**

- Keep away from sick or dead animals
- Closely supervise children around animals
- Avoid touching or feeding unknown, stray or wild animals
- Routinely vaccinate your pets and livestock against rabies
- Be aware of the risk of rabies in your area and in areas where you travel
- Know the signs of rabies and report an animal that's acting strangely

[Signs of rabies in animals](#)

## **Before you travel**

**(Rabies: Travel health advice - Canada.ca)**

Before you travel, check whether the country or area you are travelling to has widespread rabies or an active rabies outbreak:

- [Rabies risk area map \(World Health Organization\)](#)
- [Travel advice and advisories](#)

Talk to your health care provider or visit a travel clinic to see if you should be vaccinated for rabies before travelling. We recommend doing this 6 weeks before you travel.

You should consider vaccination if you:

- Have a higher risk for rabies exposure
- Are travelling to areas where rabies is widespread or there's poor access to medical care

[Learn more about travel vaccinations](#)

### **Signs of rabies in humans:**

Rabies is fatal unless you get treatment before symptoms develop. Symptoms of rabies usually take about 3 to 8 weeks to develop.

Early rabies symptoms can include:

- Fever
- Tiredness
- Headaches
- Anxiety or irritability

You may also feel pain, tingling, numbness or itching around the area where an animal has bitten, scratched or licked.

Symptoms worsen quickly as the virus attacks the central nervous system in the body. The neurologic symptoms can appear in the following 2 ways: **encephalitic rabies** and

**paralytic rabies.** [You can read more about the symptoms here.](#)

### **If you may have been exposed to rabies:**

- Immediately wash the wound thoroughly with soap and water for at least 15 minutes.
- Remove any contaminated clothing.
- Seek medical attention right away for assessment and possible preventive treatment.
- Provide information about the animal if possible so it can be monitored or tested.

**Seek medical attention immediately if you think you may have been exposed to an animal that's infected with rabies.**

### **Online Resources**

- [Rabies: Prevention and risks - Canada.ca](#)
- [Rabies: Travel health advice - Canada.ca](#)
- [Rabies Prevention – City of Toronto](#)

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**Want to learn about other health topics?**

[Health Resources](#)

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# Upcoming Seniors Health Series Health Education Workshops

## Wednesdays in April

The TW FHT is proud to offer a Senior Health Series.

These workshops focus on providing practical tools, reliable information, and supportive guidance to help you live well as you age.

These workshops are **for TW FHT patients only**.

Recommended for patients aged 65 and older, but individuals of other ages are welcome to participate.

Spaces are limited.

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### Preventing Falls: Staying Strong and Steady

In-person at Garrison Creek



Have you had a fall or are you afraid of falling? Are you curious to learn what you can do to prevent a fall?

Join us for this in-person interactive information session to learn about falls, what contributes to falls and ways you can prevent falls.

[Sign up for this workshop](#)

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## **Osteoporosis Foundations**

In-person at Garrison Creek



Are you an older adult or caregiver that wants to learn about osteoporosis? Do you want to learn why maintaining good bone health is important?

[Sign up for this workshop](#)

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## **Foot Care for Seniors**

In-person at Bathurst site



Foot pain may keep you from enjoying life and staying active. Feet that are healthy and pain free contribute to your safety and independence.

Come join us for this workshop to learn about how you can properly take care of your feet to maintain good quality of life.

[Sign up for this workshop](#)

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**Living Well as We Age:  
Staying Healthy, Active and Connected**  
In-person at Garrison Creek site



This workshop will share simple but useful tips for living well as you age. You will learn how to keep your mind active and sharp, manage stress, stay active, and make safe choices about medications and vaccines.

**Please note:** this workshop will be offered from 10:00 to 11:30 am.

[Sign up for this workshop](#)

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[www.twfht.ca](http://www.twfht.ca)

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