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

Animal Rabies Testing Resources in Iowa

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

http://www.idph.state.ia.us/CADE/DiseaseIndex.aspx?disease=Rabies
http://www.cdc.gov/rabies
http://www.cfsph.iastate.edu