



RABIES PRE-EXPOSURE IMMUNIZATION GUIDELINES

2018

New Jersey veterinarians, veterinary technicians, students enrolled in veterinary or veterinary technician school, animal control officers, animal shelter workers, persons who will be preparing rabies specimens, persons working closely with or handling wildlife (including bats), and persons handling unvaccinated cats and dogs are classified in the **frequent-risk category** and they are recommended to receive rabies pre-exposure immunization.

Certain persons travelling to high risk destinations around the world may also be recommended to receive rabies pre-exposure immunization before travel.

Pre-exposure immunization consists of three 1.0 ml doses of human diploid cell vaccine (HDCV) or purified chick embryo cell culture (PCEC) administered intramuscularly on days 0, 7, and 21 or 28.

NOTE: Persons who have received complete pre- or post-exposure treatment series are considered pre-immunized for any future exposures. If exposed to a rabid animal, pre-immunized individuals will need only two booster doses of vaccine (days 0 and 3) and NO human rabies immune globulin (HRIG), as opposed to four doses of vaccine and HRIG required for non-immunized individuals. Pre-immunized individuals should keep their proof of vaccination to verify their immunized status in the event they are exposed to a rabid animal.

Although antibody levels do not define a person's immune status, they are a marker of continuing immune response. To ensure the continuity of an immune response, titers should be checked periodically, with booster doses administered as needed. Persons in the frequent-risk category should have a serum sample tested every 2 years to determine if an adequate antibody level persists. If their antibody titer is below the 1:5 serum dilution by rapid fluorescent focus inhibition test (RFFIT), a booster dose of vaccine should be given. Persons who are pre-immunized or have received the complete post-exposure prophylaxis series are considered previously vaccinated for any future exposures. For more information, visit: https://www.cdc.gov/rabies/specific_groups/travelers/pre-exposure_vaccinations.html

Manufactures of Human rabies vaccines:

There are two human rabies vaccines licensed in the United States that are available from pharmaceutical suppliers:

- RabAvert (PCEC)
GlaxoSmithKline
Telephone number 1-866-475-8222
<https://www.gsksource.com>
- IMOVAX Rabies (HDCV)
Sanofi Pasteur
Telephone number (800) 822-2463 (800 VACCINE)
https://www.vaccineshoppe.com/image.cfm?doc_id=5983&image_type=product_pdf

Manufacturers will only ship these vaccines to health care providers. Travel medicine clinics stock rabies vaccine and may administer it to persons in need of pre-exposure immunization due to their occupation.

Rabies RFFIT antibody serology testing is performed at the following laboratories:

- Atlanta Health Associates, Inc.
Telephone: (800) 717-5612 or 770-205-9091
<http://www.atlantahealth.net/>
- Kansas State Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory
Telephone: (785) 532-4483
<http://www.ksvdl.org/rabies-laboratory>

Testing at Kansas State Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory may also be requested through Quest Labs as Rabies Vaccine Response End Point Titer (order # 5789).