

What You Should Know Before You Sign Up to Take the Rabies Vaccine

1. Vaccination against rabies is mandatory for students and for many employees of the SVM. Taking the vaccine should be given priority over other activities. **August 19, August 26, and September 9, 2009, are the only times the vaccine will be given this year, so make your plans accordingly.**
2. Pre-exposure prophylaxis consists of a 3-dose series and the timing of these doses is critical for development of immunity. This means you must take EACH dose when it is scheduled. In emergency situations, I can make arrangements for you to take the vaccine at the Student Health Center if no more than a day or two has passed. If you become ill during the series, contact me for advice. If you do not complete the series as scheduled, you may have to retake the entire series, either next year at the SVM if you are a first year student, or from your own physician if you will be seeing animals before next fall.
3. If you are now taking corticosteroids, if you have had any of these drugs in the last few weeks, or if you have an immunosuppressive illness, the rabies vaccine may not produce active immunity. If you are in this situation, check with me so special arrangements can be made.
4. Serious reactions to this vaccine are very rare, but as with all vaccines, the medical personnel don't take any chances. Therefore, you will be required to wait in the auditorium for 30 minutes following each injection.
5. Mild side effects are fairly common. These are similar to those that are experienced with many vaccines and are NOT a reason to discontinue taking the series. Do not be surprised if your arm is sore, reddened, or swollen at the injection site. You may also experience headache, muscle aches, or feel as if you are coming down with the flu. Again, these reactions are NOT considered reason for discontinuing the series. The discomfort generally lasts less than 24 hours and can usually be managed with acetaminophen (Tylenol) or ibuprofen (Advil or Motrin).
6. Remember, the benefits of the pre-exposure vaccine series far outweigh the risks and inconvenience. And you'll never have to take the series again!

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Important Information for Rabies Vaccine Recipients*
Please read carefully and keep this page for your records.

You will be receiving RabAvert[®] Rabies Vaccine for Human Use. RabAvert is made by Novartis Vaccines and Diagnostics GmbH & Co. It is a sterile freeze-dried vaccine obtained by growing the fixed-virus strain Flury LEP in primary cultures of chicken fibroblasts.

In the United States, the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) recommends three injections of 1.0 mL each in the deltoid for pre-exposure immunization: one injection on day 0, one on day 7, and one on either day 21 or 28.

Hypersensitivity

At present there is no evidence that persons are at increased risk if they have egg hypersensitivities that are not anaphylactic or anaphylactoid in nature. Although there is no safety data regarding the use of RabAvert in patients with egg allergies, experience with other vaccines derived from primary cultures of chick embryo fibroblasts demonstrates that documented egg hypersensitivity does not necessarily predict an increased likelihood of adverse reactions. There is no evidence to indicate that persons with allergies to chickens or feathers are at increased risk of reaction to vaccines produced in primary cultures of chick embryo fibroblasts.

Since reconstituted RabAvert contains processed bovine gelatin and trace amounts of chicken protein, neomycin, chlortetracycline and amphotericin B, the possibility of allergic reactions in individuals hypersensitive to these substances should be considered when administering the vaccine.

Drug Interactions

Radiation therapy, antimalarial drugs, corticosteroids, other immunosuppressive agents and immunosuppressive illnesses can interfere with the development of active immunity after vaccination, and may diminish the protective efficacy of the vaccine. If you have recently taken oral or injectable corticosteroids it may be advisable to wait until later to take this vaccine series. Discuss your situation with our physician before taking the vaccine if you fall into this category or if you have any conditions that may affect your immune system.

Adverse Reactions

The most common side effects include mild-to-moderate local reactions occurring at the site of injection, including pain, reddening, swelling, and induration. These occur in 30-85% of people receiving the vaccine. Localized lymphadenopathy occurs in about 15% of vaccine recipients. Mild systemic reactions may include headache, myalgia [muscle aches], dizziness, and malaise [general unwellness or vague flu-like feelings]. These may occur in 10 to 50% of vaccine recipients. What this means is that you should not be surprised if the vaccine causes some minor discomfort. These are NOT considered serious side effects and are **NOT** a reason to discontinue the series. Once initiated, rabies prophylaxis should not be interrupted or discontinued because of such local or mild systemic adverse reactions to rabies vaccine. The discomfort is usually of short duration and can be managed by taking acetaminophen (Tylenol), ibuprofen (Advil or Motrin), or other pain reliever.

Uncommonly observed adverse events include temperatures above 38°C (100°F), swollen lymph nodes, pain in limbs, and gastrointestinal complaints. In rare cases, patients have experienced severe headache, fatigue, circulatory reactions, sweating, chills, monoarthritis and allergic reactions; transient paresthesias and one case of suspected urticaria pigmentosa have also been reported.

In very rare cases, neurological and neuromuscular events have been reported in temporal association with administration of RabAvert. What this means is that these conditions have occurred a short time after receiving this vaccine, but that no cause-and-effect relationship has been established.

*Excerpted from the RabAvert package insert. Full text available at http://www.novartis-vaccines.com/products/us-pl-rabavertRev%2010_06Cropped.pdf

Rabies Pre-Exposure Immunization Consent Form

Check appropriate box: Year I Year II Year III Year IV Vet Student
 Graduate Student Student Worker
 Faculty Staff Acct. # (for employees only) _____

Check one:

- I have never had a rabies vaccination and am taking the full three-dose pre-exposure series
 I have already had the pre-exposure series and am taking one booster dose

Please print the following information:

Name: _____ Sex: _____ Age: _____
 Date of birth: _____ LSU ID# _____
 SVM Department or Box #: _____

Are you allergic to any of the following substances?

Eggs	<input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes	Neomycin	<input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes
Bovine gelatin	<input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes	Chlortetracycline	<input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes
Chicken	<input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes	Amphotericin B	<input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes

Have you ever had an adverse reaction to any vaccine? No Yes

If yes, give details: _____

Are you currently being treated with any type of corticosteroid or any other immunosuppressive drugs?

No Yes (specify): _____

If female, are you pregnant? No Yes (due date): _____

I have read the information regarding the possible side effects and complications of RabAvert Rabies Vaccine for Human Use. I consent to having the primary vaccination series administered to me.

Date: _____ Signature: _____

Date	Lot #	SHC Use Only	
		Site	Initials

**Make checks payable to "LSU SVM."
 Bring this completed form with you to orientation.**