



Rabies Vaccination Policy and Information

Effective January 1, 2022, the AVMA-CVTEA (accrediting body for the Murray State College Veterinary Nursing Program) initiated a requirement that ALL veterinary nursing students receive pre-exposure prophylaxis rabies vaccination before working directly with animals in their academic program.

It is required that all veterinary nursing students be vaccinated for rabies. Students must have a copy of their pre-exposure rabies vaccinations on file with the program before beginning courses requiring contact with animals.

Most states require by law for dogs and cats to be vaccinated for rabies but in reality, this does not occur. We can never be absolutely assured that any vaccinated or unvaccinated dog or cat is not carrying rabies and we will not know the history on every animal that our students will work with.

Murray State College Veterinary Nursing Program follows the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices Risk Category 3 and recommendations. The ACIP develops U.S. recommendations about how to use vaccines to prevent disease in the United States, including how to prevent rabies in people. The ACIP updated rabies vaccine recommendations in May 2022:

Table with 3 columns: Risk Category 3, Description of group (People who interact with mammals... This group includes: Most veterinarians, veterinary technicians, animal control officers, wildlife biologists, rehabilitators, trappers, and spelunkers (cave explorers); Certain travelers to regions outside of the U.S. where rabies in dogs is commonly found), and Recommendations (2 doses, days 0 and 7; Either a one-time titer check after 1 year and up to 3 years following the first 2-dose vaccination; Or 1-dose booster between 3 weeks and 3 years following the first vaccine in the 2-dose vaccination)

Rabies - Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) https://www.cdc.gov/rabies/index.html

The Center for Disease Control considers individuals that work with animals from a rabies endemic region in the "frequent" exposure risk category. The CDC recommends these individuals obtain the primary course of rabies vaccination with serologic monitoring and /or booster vaccination every two years.

Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis

Pre-exposure vaccination is recommended for persons in high-risk groups and for other persons whose activities bring them into frequent contact with rabies virus or potentially rabid bats, raccoons, skunks,

cats, dogs, or other species at risk of having rabies. For more information about pre-exposure prophylaxis, see Human Rabies Prevention - United States, 1999 Recommendations of the Immunization Practices Advisory Committee (ACIP).

### **Purpose of Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis**

Pre-exposure prophylaxis is given for several reasons. First, although pre-exposure vaccination does not eliminate the need for additional medical attention after a rabies exposure, it simplifies therapy by eliminating the need for human rabies immune globulin (HRIG) and decreasing the number of vaccine doses needed. Second, it may enhance immunity in persons whose post-exposure therapy might be delayed. Finally, it may provide protection to persons with unrecognized exposures to rabies.

### **Treatment if exposed to a rabid animal**

For **vaccinated individuals**, the wound is immediately and thoroughly cleansed with soap and water. Then 2 doses of rabies vaccine are given, one is given immediately, the other is given three days later. For **non-vaccinated individuals**, the wound is immediately and thoroughly cleaned with soap and water. The area around the wound is injected with Human Rabies Immune Globulin (HRIG), and then 5 doses of rabies vaccine are given after the exposure on days 0, 3, 7, 14, and 28.

### **Information on Rabies Pre-Exposure Vaccination**

<http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dvrd/rabies/prevention&control/preventi.htm>

<https://www.cdc.gov/rabies/resources/availability.html>

### **Rabies Vaccine and Immune Globulin**

There is no treatment for rabies after symptoms of the disease appear. However, post-exposure prophylaxis is very effective for prevention of clinical infection. Although rabies among humans is rare in the United States, every year an estimated 18,000 people receive rabies preexposure prophylaxis and an additional 40,000 receive post-exposure prophylaxis.

### **Vaccination – Where to obtain vaccine?**

Family Health Center of Southern Oklahoma (FHCSO) located in Tishomingo, Oklahoma, will order and schedule the 2-dose vaccination schedule, 1-week apart prior to school starting in August for the face-to-face program. Student will need to pay for the vaccine before it can be ordered and FHCSO will file with your insurance company and will reimburse the student if it is covered.

Walgreens with on-site clinics can usually order and give vaccine.

Walgreens, CVS and some other pharmacy locations may order vaccine for you depending on your insurance and provider.

Please provide the letter below to your insurance company for verification of the rabies vaccination requirement for the veterinary nursing program.