

VMRCVM Rabies Pre-exposure Immunization Program DVM Student Information

Policy:

Rabies is a zoonotic disease almost invariably fatal once clinical signs appear. Humans are well protected against clinical rabies by vaccination. You, as a student at the VMRCVM will be in the highest risk category for rabies exposure. It is the policy of the VMRCVM to provide the best protection for its students and employees against serious health hazards and therefore rabies vaccination is required.

The current recommended immunization consists of an initial series of three intramuscular injections, at 0, 7, 21 or 28 days, of Purified Chick Embryo Cell vaccine. Every two years, titration, and in the case of low antibody titer, subsequent booster inoculation should follow the initial immunization series. For students at the VMRCVM, the cost of inoculation and titering at the Schiffert Health Center will be shared equally by you and the VMRCVM. Last year the student cost for vaccinations was \$259.50. We are not expected to receive the 2008-2009 cost until September 2008. There may be an increase in cost.

Intent of policy:

The intent of this policy is to assure your protection against rabies. You may already have received rabies immunization and will not require immediate vaccination upon your entry to the VMRCVM. You are required, however, to certify that you have been so immunized on the Rabies Immunization form, and to bear the possible consequences of your refusal to accept immediate vaccination from the College should you be exposed to rabies.

Refusal to participate:

The VMRCVM recognizes that you may have grounds for objecting to rabies vaccinations. There are religious or conscientious grounds and medical grounds, such as a history of severe hypersensitivity reaction to vaccinations. If you object to any future rabies vaccinations, you must indicate such on the Rabies immunization form and again bear the possible consequences of your objection should you be exposed to rabies. If your objection is on medical grounds, proof of previous hypersensitivity reactions is required. In case of your objection to vaccinations either on medical or on religious/ conscientious grounds, you are required to sign a release form absolving Virginia Tech of legal responsibilities for the possible consequences of your exposure to rabies. Those forms will be available to incoming students at orientation and are available at other times by contacting Ms. Stephanie Randel at srandel@vt.edu.

Program information:

Students who need to be vaccinated or titered will be contacted in September with specific instructions. No action is needed until that time.

Rabies program contact information:

Dr. Bill Pierson, Biosecurity Coordinator for the VTH
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540-231-4529

Ms. Stephanie Randel, Rabies Program Manager
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540-231-3490