



Philadelphia Department of Public Health
Division of Disease Control

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Health Advisory

Human Rabies Vaccine Supply Shortage and Rabies Prophylaxis Recommendations September 10, 2012

The Philadelphia Department of Public Health (PDPH), Division of Disease Control (DDC) would like to notify healthcare providers and pharmacies of short-term changes in the supply of rabies vaccine for pre-exposure prophylaxis and reiterate appropriate use of rabies post-exposure prophylaxis.

Pre-Exposure Vaccine Supply

- Sanofi Pasteur (maker of IMOVAX) and Novartis (maker of RabAvert) are currently unable to directly supply rabies vaccine for pre-exposure vaccination.
- Additional lots of these vaccines are expected to be released in the coming months, at which time vaccine intended for use as pre-exposure prophylaxis can be ordered.

Post-Exposure Vaccine and IG supply

- There are currently no shortages in the supply of rabies immune globulin or vaccine for post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP).
- Sanofi Pasteur will supply IMOVAX rabies vaccine for use as PEP of patients with documented rabies exposures. The vaccine can be ordered by completing the attached form.
- RabAvert vaccine for PEP can continue to be ordered from Novartis, per usual procedures.

Rabies Post-Exposure Guidelines:

Rabies PEP consists of human rabies immune globulin administered on day 0 for persons not previously immunized for rabies and 4 doses of vaccine administered on days 0, 3, 7, and 14. For persons with broadly defined immunosuppression, a fifth dose of vaccine should be administered on day 28.

Decision-making regarding the need for rabies PEP should be guided by the following considerations:

- Bites from known or suspect rabid animals are the highest risk for rabies. Whenever possible, wild animals (e.g., raccoons, bats, skunks, foxes, groundhogs, woodchucks, etc.) that were involved in human exposures should be tested for rabies. If the animal is available for testing, provision of PEP should be based on test results. If the animal is unavailable for testing, PEP is recommended.
- Bites from healthy, domestic animals are at lower risk for rabies. Every effort should be made to observe animals (e.g., dogs, cats, ferrets) involved in bite cases for 10 days, before administering rabies post-exposure prophylaxis. When animal bites are reported to DDC, the information regarding the animal is forwarded to the PDPH Vector Control Program for observation if the animal's location and owner information are reported with the bite.
- Bites from squirrels, hamsters, guinea pigs, gerbils, chipmunks, rats, mice, other small rodents, and rabbits almost never require rabies post-exposure prophylaxis. Consult with DDC staff if you believe rabies PEP might be indicated following an exposure to one of these animals.
- Non-bite exposures such as contamination of open wounds, abrasions (including scratches) or mucous membranes with saliva or other potentially infectious material (e.g., neural tissue) very rarely cause rabies. Other indirect contact (e.g., petting or handling an animal, contact with blood, urine, feces or contact of saliva with intact skin) do not constitute exposures.
- Rabies PEP for persons exposed to bats should be limited to cases where a sleeping person, incapacitated person, or very young child has been in a room with a bat that is not available for testing. If the bat is available for testing, provision of PEP should be based on test results.

All animal bites should be reported to PDPH by calling 215-685-6748. For public health consultation contact DDC at 215-685-6740. On weekends and after normal business hours, call 215-686-4514 and ask to speak with the person on-call for the Division of Disease Control.

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Philadelphia Department of Public Health

Division of Disease Control • 500 South Broad Street, Philadelphia, PA 19146
215-685-6740 (phone) • 215-545-8362 (fax) • www.phila.gov/health/units/ddc • hip.phila.gov

Rabies Post-Exposure Form

Thank you for printing information clearly

Currently, both IMOVAX® Rabies vaccine and Imogam® Rabies-HT, Rabies Immune Globulin (Human) USP, Heat Treated are only being shipped directly to customers as needed for use with patients that have documented exposures to rabies which require post-exposure prophylaxis. This measure is necessary to responsibly manage the limited supplies of both products. Please fill out this form in its entirety and Sanofi Pasteur will contact you within the next business day regarding shipment.

Account Name:		Sanofi Pasteur Account Number:
Street Address:		Suite/BLDG#
State and City:	ZIP Code:	
Telephone:	Fax:	
Office E-mail Address:		
ATTN Line for Shipping:		
ATTN Line for Billing:		
Delivery Hours/Days (please include if closed during lunch):		
Is Saturday delivery required? Yes _____ No _____ (If yes, office must be open from 8:00am until 5:00pm)		
Primary Office Contact Person (First and Last Name)	Title:	Purchase Order # (optional):
Physician's Name (Please Print):		Physician Signature: Date:

Is this request for IMOVAX Rabies vaccine or Imogam Rabies-HT RIG (please circle appropriate product)?

Number of Patients Exposed to Rabies: _____

Please provide the weight of each patient below.

Total Number of Imogam Rabies-HT RIG 2mL units needed for Post-Exposure Prophylaxis: _____

Total Number of IMOVAX Rabies vaccine doses needed for Post-Exposure Prophylaxis: _____

After filling out this form in its entirety, please send to the following:

Attention: Sanofi Pasteur Customer Service

Fax Number: **1-877-287-9391**

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