

**Update on Rabies Vaccine Availability and
Dose Schedule for Hospital Staff
May 2011**

Rabies Vaccine Availability

- Only two companies provide rabies vaccine: Sanofi Pasteur and Novartis. In June 2007, Sanofi Pasteur began renovating its IMOVAX Rabies vaccine production facility in France. These renovations are now complete and the facility is approved and operational. As a result, previous limits on purchasing IMOVAX Rabies vaccine for pre-exposure use have been lifted. Vaccine may be ordered for pre-exposure and post-exposure use.
- Health care providers who wish to order IMOVAX® no longer need to fill out the Rabies Post-Exposure Use Form or obtain a pass code prior to ordering. IMOVAX® Rabies vaccine can be ordered via www.vaccineshoppe.com or by calling 1-800-VACCINE (1-800-822-2463).
- Novartis is providing RabAvert® vaccine for both pre- and post-exposure prophylaxis, without any supply restrictions, and can be ordered through their distributors listed below:
 - ✓ Amerisource Bergen Corporation (contact local center)
 - ✓ ASD Healthcare: 800-746-6273
 - ✓ Cardinal: 800-964-5227
 - ✓ FFF Enterprises: 800-843-7477
 - ✓ McKesson Medical-Surgical: 800-950-9229
 - ✓ Novartis Vaccines: 800-244-7668

Change in Rabies Post-Exposure Prophylaxis Vaccine Schedule

- On June 24th, 2009 the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) approved the recommendation to change the current rabies PEP schedule of 1 dose of Human Rabies Immune Globulin (HRIG) followed by 5 rabies vaccines to 1 dose of HRIG followed by 4 rabies vaccines. The new recommendation is currently posted on the CDC website: <http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/rr5902a1.htm>.
- Based upon the ACIP vote, the 2008 recommendation will be modified to reflect the current recommended schedule for rabies post-exposure prophylaxis:



- ✓ Administration of human rabies immune globulin (20IU/kg body weight) on day zero, AND
- ✓ 4 doses of vaccine (1ml administered intramuscularly) on days 0, 3, 7, and 14.

Note that the required FDA process to change product inserts to reflect this current recommendation is extensive. Consequently, there will be a conflict between the label recommendation of 5 doses and the ACIP recommendation of 4 doses. For more information about this, please see the ACIP 2009 meeting discussion minutes on pp. 38-45. The archived meeting minutes are available upon request (acip@cdc.gov).

If A Patient Seeks Rabies Post-Exposure Prophylaxis (PEP)

- Provide appropriate wound care.

- Please do not begin the PEP series prior to assessing the risk of rabies exposure. Rabies PEP should not be recommended if the animal is currently available for a 10 day observation period (domestic animal), or has been submitted to the laboratory and rabies test results are pending. No prophylaxis should be provided following a rodent bite unless a risk assessment determines a risk of rabies exposure or the animal tests positive for rabies.

- Assessing the risk of rabies exposure helps determine the need for PEP and reduces the anxiety and fear that leads to unnecessary vaccination. The Georgia Poison Center (404-616-9000 or 1-800-222-1222), your local health department, or the state health department (404-657-2588) can provide risk assessments of rabies exposure in a patient.

