



RABIES VACCINATION NOTES

Veterinary Class of 2012

Cummings School of Veterinary Medicine at Tufts University requires pre-exposure rabies vaccination for all students, unless the vaccine is medically contraindicated. Pre-exposure vaccination consists of three injections given on days 1, 7 and 21 or 28. The series must be completed prior to enrolling in a Selective. Fall semester Selectives will begin the fifth week of the semester. However, first year students are discouraged from participating in a Selective during the first semester.

Tufts University does not provide the rabies vaccine, nor is there a health clinic on campus. However, I will arrange a 'Rabies Vaccine Clinic' to be held on the Grafton Campus with the first dose being given within a week or two following orientation. The dates and times of the clinic will be coordinated with your academic schedule, and should be available by the beginning of August. Students who have a fear of receiving injections should consider completing the series prior to beginning school. Side effects are minimal, but there are generally a few students who report mild flu-like symptoms following vaccination.

The cost of the vaccine is covered for students who choose to enroll in the **student health insurance plan**, *TUFTS Health Plan*. Students with an alternate health insurance, who want to participate in the clinic, will pay for the series at the time the first dose is administered. The cost will be determined later in the summer and will depend on the vaccine cost to the clinic. (Last year's total cost for the three-dose series was \$500.00.) The clinic giving the vaccine is unable to process billing to other insurance companies. Therefore, if your alternate insurance company will pay for the vaccine, you will be given a receipt, which you can submit to your company for reimbursement.

If you have already completed the vaccine series and it has been over two years, the CDC recommends a serum sample tested for rabies antibody every 2 years. If your titer falls below 1:5, a pre-exposure booster dose of vaccine is recommended. For more detailed information, the CDC's *Rabies Prevention – United States, March 22, 1991, Recommendations of the Immunization Practices, Advisory Committee (ACIP)*, can be accessed at: <http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/0041987.htm>. If you need a booster dose, you may have it administered on one of the clinic dates.

In January 2008, the Cummings School of Veterinary Medicine made the decision to make the rabies antibody titer a requirement for all third year students. Upon receiving the antibody titer documentation from the V'09 students, we found that approximately 10% of the class had insufficient immunity to rabies and needed a booster dose of vaccine. Please note: pre-exposure vaccination does not eliminate the need for post-exposure treatment, if exposed to rabies.

I will send you additional information in early August regarding the vaccine clinic arrangements. If you already know you will be participating in the clinic, please email me at Gianna.Dimitrakos@tufts.edu to be placed on the sign-up list. Please include your Name; E-mail address; whether you will be enrolling in the student group of *Tufts Health Plan* or if you have your own health insurance; and your Telephone Number.

Thank you,

Gianna Dimitrakos
Immunization Data Coordinator