

September 7, 2012

**TO: Healthcare Providers, Hospitals, Local Health Departments**

**FROM: NYSDOH Bureau of Communicable Disease Control**

**INFORMATIONAL MESSAGE: LIMITED AVAILABILITY OF HUMAN  
RABIES VACCINES**

**For healthcare facilities, please distribute immediately to the Infection Control  
Department, Emergency Department, Infectious Disease Department, Pharmacy,  
Director of Nursing, Medical Director, and all patient care areas.**

Attached is a news release from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) regarding limitations in the supply of rabies vaccines for use in humans.

The New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH), Bureau of Communicable Disease Control (BCDC) has been made aware that several local health departments and providers have had difficulty acquiring rabies vaccine to provide rabies postexposure prophylaxis (RPEP) to persons with potential rabies exposure. According to information provided in the attached release, RabAvert rabies vaccine (Novartis) is available for RPEP. Imovax Rabies (Sanofi Pasteur) is also available for RPEP, however additional information must be provided to Sanofi Pasteur in order for the vaccine to be released.

In all cases, rabies vaccines cannot be pre-ordered to maintain a supply for future use.

Providers or LHDs needing to order Imovax Rabies for specific patients can contact Sanofi Pasteur and complete their rabies postexposure form. A copy of the form and a letter Sanofi Pasteur has sent to providers are also included with this advisory.

As additional information regarding this vaccine shortage becomes available the NYSDOH will provide updates. If you have questions about the process for acquiring biologics, or if you are having difficulty acquiring biologics and would like assistance, please contact the BCDC at 518-473-4439, or via email at [bcdc@health.state.ny.us](mailto:bcdc@health.state.ny.us).



## Rabies Vaccine: Current Situation

**Posted: September 7, 2012**



### Current Situation

- Rabies vaccine for pre-exposure use is available only from wholesale distributors who have existing stocks of RabAvert vaccine from Novartis.
- At this time, there are no limitations in the supply of rabies immune globulin or vaccine for post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP).
- Sanofi Pasteur, maker of IMOVAX (Rabies Vaccine), is currently unable to directly supply rabies vaccine for pre-exposure vaccination.
- Sanofi Pasteur will continue to supply rabies vaccine for PEP to health care providers who are treating patients who have had documented rabies exposures.
- Novartis, makers of RabAvert (Rabies Vaccine), is also currently unable to directly supply rabies vaccine for pre-exposure vaccination.
- Additional lots of RabAvert and IMOVAX are expected to be released in the coming months. These lots are expected to return supplies to normal levels.
- There are ongoing discussions among federal, state, and local public health personnel to continue evaluation of the current supply of rabies biologics and review additional strategies as necessary.

### Recommendations Unaffected By Supply Constraint

- Current supplies of RabAvert available through wholesale distributors are expected to be sufficient to meet demand for pre-exposure vaccination until additional lots are released
- Persons at increased risk for rabies exposure should take appropriate precautions to avoid exposure.
- Vaccine is available for PEP, and providers should consult with local/state public health departments to ensure appropriate use of PEP ([State and local rabies consultation contacts \(/rabies/resources/contacts.html\)](#)).
- To help people avoid exposures, general rabies awareness and prevention messages should be emphasized (e.g., avoid wildlife contact, vaccinate pets/livestock, capture/observe/test exposing animal, etc.).

\* Use of trade names and commercial sources is for identification only and does not imply endorsement by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

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Content source: [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#)

[National Center for Emerging and Zoonotic Infectious Diseases \(NCEZID\)](#)

[Division of High-Consequence Pathogens and Pathology \(DHCPP\)](#)

August 2012

Dear Health Care Provider:

As a valued customer, we are notifying you that both IMOVAX<sup>®</sup> Rabies vaccine and Imogam<sup>®</sup> Rabies-HT, Rabies Immune Globulin (Human) USP, Heat Treated will be available for post-exposure use only.

The situation is due to a significant increase in demand during the summer months along with a manufacturing delay. At this point, Sanofi Pasteur expects to have additional supplies of IMOVAX Rabies vaccine available in the next several weeks. Imogam Rabies-HT immune globulin should be available more broadly later this year.

To obtain either IMOVAX Rabies vaccine or Imogam Rabies-HT immune globulin, you must complete a Rabies Post-exposure Form, which must be filled out in its entirety and faxed to Sanofi Pasteur at 1-877-287-9391.

We look forward to continuing to serve you and your patients.

Sincerely,



William L. Averbeck  
Associate Vice President, Marketing

MKT25579

**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

MKT25576