



ALASKA NATIVE TRIBAL HEALTH CONSORTIUM
Division of Community Environment & Health
4500 Diplomacy Drive, Suite 420
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Instructions for Lay Vaccinators

About the Vaccine

1. Dogs, cats, and ferrets must be at least 3 months (12 weeks) of age or older to receive their first rabies shot.
2. If the vaccination history is uncertain (if you're not sure if it had a rabies shot before, no matter how old the animal is) mark the expiration date of the shot as 1 year from the date given. The first shot is good for 1 year, the second and all following shots are good for 3 years from the date the shot was given. It is fine to give the shot annually (every year) should the owner request it.
3. The rabies vaccine must be kept refrigerated. Temperatures should be recorded at least one time per day on a temperature log sheet. Vaccine must NOT be frozen. If it's been frozen then it's no good and won't protect against rabies.
*****DO NOT USE VACCINE THAT HAS BEEN FROZEN!*****
4. Check the expiration date on your vaccine. If it is expired, do not use it—it's no good anymore. Each vial has 10 doses. Try to use all 10 doses at a time (give 10 shots on the same day).
5. If a vial has been used and there is still some vaccine left, if the vaccine is kept under sterile conditions (i.e. the right holding temperature) and the vaccine color hasn't changed then the vaccine is good until its expiration date. **WHEN IN DOUBT...THROW IT OUT!**
6. The dose for one animal, no matter the age or size, is 1.0 cc (1.0 cc = 1 ml).

How to Give Shots

1. Remove the syringe from its wrapper and tighten the detachable needle to the syringe to ensure that it is not loose and will not detach while administering a shot. Uncap the needle. Do not touch the needle or allow it to touch anything. If the needle touches anything besides the vaccine or animal, discard it and get another.
2. Mix the vaccine by swishing back and forth. With one hand, hold the bottle of the vaccine upside down. With the other hand insert the needle through the rubber top. If the needle is inserted too far only air will be drawn from the vial.

3. Withdraw the syringe plunger until the syringe contains slightly over 1.0 cc of vaccine. With the needle still in the vaccine bottle and pointed upward, tap the syringe with your fingers to dislodge any air bubbles. Push the plunger in to force the air bubbles out of the syringe, until there is 1.0 cc of vaccine in the syringe. At this point there should be only 1.0 cc of vaccine and no air bubbles in the syringe.
4. Have the owner hold the dog, cat, or ferret gently by the head.
5. The vaccine is to be given under the skin of the neck (known as subcutaneous or subQ) or in the hind quarter muscle (known as intramuscular or IM). IM shots are given by inserting the needle at a 90° angle into the hind quarter with a quick thrust and depressing the plunger of the syringe. SubQ shots are given by using one hand to bunch up the skin of the neck, inserting the needle at a 45° angle to the skin, and depressing the plunger of the syringe. Be careful not to push the needle through too far, you only need to break the skin. Be sure to use each syringe only once.
6. Dispose of the syringe in a sharps container.

Filling out the Certificate

Certificates must be filled out for each animal given a rabies shot. The certificates should be filled out as completely and accurately as possible with the following information:

- Owner's name and residence or PO Box
- Species, sex, age, size, predominant breed, and color(s)
- Animal's name
- Vaccination duration (1 yr or 3 yrs, depending on vaccination history)
- Date of vaccination
- Expiration date of vaccination
- Vaccine producer's first 3 letters (i.e. IMRAB = IMR) and serial # from bottle.
- Tag number (the tag for the animal's collar is numbered)
- Your name, address, and Lay Vaccinator number

Give the owner the correct tag, an "s" hook to attach the tag to the animal's collar, and the white (top) copy of the certificate. Send the pink or yellow copy to ANTHC, Community Environment and Health, ATTN: Rabies Prevention Program, 4500 Diplomacy Drive, Suite 425, Anchorage, AK 99508. Send in the copies as frequently as possible so that the computer database can be kept current should the animal be involved in a biting incident.

Call us when you need more supplies or have any questions or concerns. Our toll free number is 1-800-560-8637.

Rabies vaccinations are the key to preventing the spread of rabies infection in both animals and humans in your community. Through your effort, rabies outbreaks can be prevented!