

Prevention of Rabies in Humans:

Serological Testing (RFFIT) and Monitoring Rabies Titers

The Rapid Fluorescent Focus Inhibition Test (RFFIT) is currently the gold standard virus neutralization antibody test recommended by both the ACIP and WHO. According to the CDC, “While other serology tests, such as ELISA, may show promise and be appropriate for research, discrepant results between such tests and virus neutralization activity have been observed. Alternative assays not recommended by ACIP or WHO are not recommended for samples requiring clinical decision making.”

WHEN should a RFFIT serological titer be done?

- According to the 2008 ACIP studies, all healthy persons vaccinated with a complete pre-exposure or post-exposure rabies prophylaxis according to the ACIP guidelines developed an adequate antibody response 2-4 weeks after completion.
- On a routine basis, no testing is required for most healthy patients completing pre-exposure or post-exposure prophylaxis strictly according to the applicable [ACIP schedule](#).
- RFFIT testing is used to monitor the response to pre-exposure rabies vaccination. See the section on Rabies Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis Vaccination in this manual for more information.
- After a post-exposure prophylaxis regimen, RFFIT serological testing is necessary to document seroconversion in any of the following circumstances:
 - The person is immunosuppressed;
 - Significant deviations of the prophylaxis schedule have occurred; *or*
 - The patient initiated treatment internationally with a non-cell culture vaccine.

Questions? Consult with a N.C. DPH Public Health veterinarian at 919-733-3419.

WHERE is Rabies Serological Testing (RFFIT) performed?

The local health department or your healthcare provider may provide assistance with obtaining RFFIT testing through two commercial laboratories that perform RFFIT testing for rabies:

Atlanta Health Associates
309 Pirkle Ferry Road, Suite D300
Cumming, GA 30040
Phone: 800-717-5612 or 770-205-9091
Fax: 770-205-9021
<http://www.atlantahealth.net>

Kansas State Veterinary Diagnostic Lab
1800 Denison Ave.
Manhattan, KS 66506
Phone: 785-532-5650 or 866-512-5650
Email: clientcare@vet.k-state.edu
<http://www.ksvdl.org/rabies-laboratory/>