

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?

- **Frequent Risk – every two years:** Persons who handle animals that may be transmitting rabies virus (e.g., veterinarians and staff, wildlife workers, and animal shelter workers) are at frequent risk for rabies exposure and should have a serological RFFIT titer taken every two (2) years.
- **Continuous Risk – every six months:** Persons at continual risk of rabies exposure, such as researchers and laboratorians who work with rabies virus, should have a RFFIT serological titer done every six (6) months.
- If the RFFIT titer is not adequate, a [single rabies booster](#) will be necessary to boost immunity.
- 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](#).
- **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 Pirckle Ferry Road, Suite D300
Cumming, GA 30040
Phone: 800-717-5612 or 770-205-9091
Fax: 770-205-9021
www.atlantahealth.net

Kansas State University
2005 Research Park Circle
Manhattan, KS 66502
Phone: 785-532-4522
Fax: 785-532-4474 or 785-532-4522
Email: rabies@vet.k-state.edu
<http://www.ksvdl.org/rabies-laboratory/>