




IACUC Policy 23: Pre-Exposure Vaccinations

Policy Purpose: The intent of this policy is to outline the requirements for all individuals handling animals.

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1. Purpose

To ensure that all personnel (PIs, graduate and undergraduate students) handling animals are sufficiently vaccinated prior to taking part in the activities outlined in the protocol.

2. Background

Many zoonotic diseases may be transmitted by direct contact with animals. When handling these animals, often the most effective means of prevention of these infectious diseases is pre-exposure vaccination followed by demonstration of effective immune response. Pre-exposure vaccination, while not 100% effective, does simplify management of post-exposure treatment and provides protection when post-exposure treatment might be delayed. Pre-exposure vaccination is provided through the Occupational Health Program by contacting the Department of Environmental Health and Safety.

3. Policy

a. Requirement for Tetanus/diphtheria Vaccination

i. Pre-Exposure

You must have a current Tetanus/diphtheria (Td) vaccination or booster (one that can be documented within the last 10 years).

ii. Post Exposure

It is recommended that you receive a Td booster if you experience a significant injury and your vaccination was administered more than 5 years previous.

b. Requirement for Rabies Vaccination

i. Pre-Exposure

All employees and students on an approved TTU IACUC protocol who handle, trap and/or obtain samples from live mammal species known to be zoonotic carriers of rabies (bats, raccoons, skunks, foxes, dogs, cats, and ferrets), which do not have a documented rabies vaccine must utilize pre-exposure rabies vaccination available through the Occupational Health Program. Pre-exposure vaccination is not required if exposure to animal bites can be physically mitigated using personal protective equipment or engineered controls (e.g., muzzles). Costs for this vaccination will be split equally between the employee or employee's department and the Occupational Health Program. Only individuals that have a documented antibody titer within the last two years will be



considered vaccinated under this guideline.

Volunteers and students not on an approved protocol who handle, trap and/or obtain samples from live mammal species known to be zoonotic carriers of rabies and cannot physically mitigate exposure to animal bites using personal protective equipment or engineered controls that prevent a bite must be vaccinated for rabies and provide proof of effective immunologic titer at their own cost. Vaccinations for rabies will follow the guidelines of the Centers for Disease Control - Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices.

ii. Post-Exposure

Any employee or student that receives a bite or scratch from animals described in this document should first clean the wound with soap and water and then report the incident to their supervisor and seek out medical attention which may include post-exposure prophylaxis. The employee or student must also notify the Office of Risk Management and Environmental Health and Safety as soon as possible.

c. Requirement for Foreign Travel

All employees and students who travel to foreign countries for purposes of collecting, trapping, and/or obtaining samples from live animal should seek information regarding pre-travel immunizations and/or chemoprophylaxis to prevent endemic diseases. These employees are encouraged to discuss their health status and planned foreign travel with an occupational health professional. This will include pre-exposure rabies immunization if work is to be conducted with mammals known to be zoonotic carriers of the disease in areas with endemic disease.