



OCT. 22, 2008

HEALTH UPDATE

Rabies Vaccine Supply Update

Novartis has announced that its rabies vaccine RabAvert is available for pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) in addition to post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP).

The North Dakota Department of Health, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and Novartis encourage providers to use the vaccine for PrEP only for those individuals at highest risk of being exposed to rabies. This includes rabies laboratory workers, veterinarians and veterinary staff, animal control personnel and wildlife workers. Vaccine should NOT be used for PrEP vaccination of other groups, such as international travelers.

Vaccine can be ordered DIRECTLY through the Novartis wholesale distributors, not the main Novartis customer service phone number. No public health oversight is required to order the vaccine. There is no password requirement, PrEP form, or need for CDC/public health approval.

Further information and updates can be found on CDC's website at www.cdc.gov/rabies/news/RabVaxupdate.html.

Categories of Health Alert messages:

- *Health Alert conveys the highest level of importance; warrants immediate action or attention.*
- *Health Advisory provides important information for a specific incident or situation; may not require immediate action.*
- *Health Update provides updated information regarding an incident or situation; no immediate action necessary.*
- *Health Information provides general information that is not necessarily considered to be of an emergent nature.*

This message is being sent to local public health units, clinics, hospitals, physicians, tribal health, North Dakota Nurses Association, North Dakota Long Term Care Association, North Dakota Healthcare Association, North Dakota Medical Association, and hospital public information officers.