

# Rabbit Hemorrhagic Disease Virus (RHDV2) Vaccine Information



**We ask our rabbit clients to take the following precautions PRIOR to a vaccine appointment:**

1. Keep your pet rabbit IN-DOORS exclusively for 14 days or longer prior to the appointment. (Our current recommendation is that all rabbits should be indoors for an indefinite period due to this deadly virus.)
2. Track your rabbit's general health for 14 days PRIOR to the appointment. If your bunny shows any signs of illness during this time, we will not administer the vaccine.
3. Bring your bunny in a closed carrier. We will not accept rabbit patients in the hospital if carried in their owner's arms.

There are 2 USDA-authorized vaccines available to use in the USA, both of which are licensed for use in the European Union. These are NOT currently licensed for use in the USA, but have been authorized for use in states that currently have confirmed cases (including California). Record-keeping and tracking vaccinated rabbits is part of the special permission process.

The vaccine is administered under the skin, as most other vaccines - thus, there is minimal discomfort from the needle injection. Vaccine reactions have been anecdotally reported to occur in about 1-2% of patients (so not common), and include soreness at the injection site, being tired, and fever. These vaccine reactions can be treated with supportive care, sometimes involving a subsequent exam by one of our two rabbit veterinarians. If your rabbit has a vaccine reaction, a subsequent exam and treatment is NOT included in the cost of the vaccine exam and administration.

The vaccine protocol is to administer 1 vaccine, and then boost in 9-12 months. It is unclear at this time how protective the vaccine is and how long the immunity lasts for. We expect, as with any vaccine, that the vaccine will decrease or eliminate symptoms of this viral disease, should your rabbit encounter the virus, and this vaccine will require annual boosts. It is quite possible that the USDA will approve a vaccine for use in the USA at some point, and this process will be easier and more mainstream.