

### **Rabies Virus Information**

Rabies is a deadly disease of warm-blooded animals, caused by a virus that attacks the nervous system.

In Maryland, rabies is most often found in raccoons, skunks, cats, bats, and groundhogs. Other mammals including dogs, ferrets, and farm animals, can get rabies if they are not vaccinated.

### **Rabies Vaccine Information**

The rabies vaccine is required by law for cats, dogs and ferrets (Md. Code Ann., Health-General § 18-318).

Your pet will be given an inactivated rabies virus vaccine that is approved for vaccination of healthy dogs, cats and ferrets, 3 months of age or older.

If this is the first rabies vaccine for your cat or dog, it will be good for 1 year. Your dog or cat must receive a booster dose 1 year from today's date.

If your cat or dog has received the rabies vaccine before (either at one of our clinics or at your regular veterinarian) the vaccine is good for 3 years. You must provide proof of previous vaccination to verify that today's vaccination is good for 3 years.

Rabies vaccination for ferrets is only good for one year and must be given annually.

### **Rabies Vaccination Adverse Reaction Information**

**It will be your responsibility to pay for any and all treatment necessary if your pet experiences anaphylaxis or requires veterinary care after receiving the rabies vaccine.**

Mild side effects are common after receiving the rabies vaccine. These signs usually start within a few hours of vaccination and last for 24- 48 hours. If the following clinical signs persist for more than 24 hours, contact your regular veterinarian.

- **Mild fever**
- **Pain or redness and swelling at the vaccination site**
- **Decreased appetite and activity level**

Although uncommon, severe allergic reactions (called anaphylaxis) may also occur. These reactions may be life threatening and constitute a medical emergency. **Seek veterinary care immediately if any of the following signs are noted:**

- **Collapse**
- **Difficulty breathing or severe coughing**
- **Swelling of the head and neck area**
- **Persistent vomiting or diarrhea**
- **Skin bumps or "hives" all over the body**