



Australian Government

Department of Health,
Disability and Ageing

AUSTRALIAN TECHNICAL ADVISORY GROUP ON IMMUNISATION (ATAGI)

STATEMENT

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COUNTERFEIT RABIES VACCINE (ABHAYRAB®) REPORTED IN INDIA: GUIDANCE FOR TRAVELLERS AND HEALTHCARE PROVIDERS

Overview

- The pharmaceutical manufacturer *Indian Immunologicals Limited* has reported that counterfeit (fake) batches of the rabies vaccine **Abhayrab®** have been circulating in India since 2023¹.
- The fake vaccine differs from the registered vaccine in formulation, packaging, labelling, and manufacturing¹.
- People who received the fake vaccine may not be fully protected against rabies and are advised to get replacement doses to ensure they are adequately protected.
- While infection with rabies is fatal, it is important to note that rabies disease after a potential exposure remains very rare among travellers.

Who may be affected?

- Travellers to India may be affected if they:
 - Received rabies vaccine **in India** from 1 November 2023 onwards, **and**
 - were administered one or more doses of **Abhayrab®**, or the **vaccine brand administered is unknown**.

Recommended actions

For people who have returned to Australia from India

- Because it is difficult to confirm whether a genuine or fake product was used, any dose of Abhayrab® or any dose where the brand is unknown that meets the criteria above should be considered invalid and replaced with a rabies vaccine registered in Australia.
- Affected travellers should consult a healthcare provider, who can help them identify invalid doses and complete a valid course.

For healthcare providers

- Where a vaccine was administered in India, replace any dose(s) of Abhayrab® or any doses where the vaccine brand was unknown, with dose(s) of a valid rabies vaccine registered in Australia (Rabipur® or Verorab®). See **Table 1** for further detail.

¹ Indian Immunologicals Limited. 23/3/25. Reporting of counterfeit version of Rabies Vaccine (Abhayrab), Batch No. KA24014 – Reg. Available at: https://drugscontrol.org/pdf/couneterfeit_abhayrab_merged.pdf - Accessed 15/12/2025

Table 1: Rabies vaccine scenarios and recommended provider actions*

Scenario	Recommended Action
All doses received are considered invalid	Restart full post-exposure prophylaxis course with vaccine registered in Australia (Rabipur® or Verorab®)
Some doses received are considered invalid	Ignore invalid doses; count valid doses [^] and resume schedule from last valid dose with a registered AND compatible vaccine ²

*Note that human rabies immunoglobulin (HRIG) does not need to be replaced.

[^]Valid vaccine doses given in India are Vaxirab-N, RABIVAX-S, Lyssavac, Vaxirab and Indirab.

For people travelling to India

- Avoid contact with animals when travelling to countries where rabies occurs.
- Anyone who is scratched, bitten or exposed to the saliva of an animal should seek immediate medical care and,
 - where possible, request a vaccine [compatible with Australian-registered rabies vaccines](#)².
- Be aware of the potential for fake vaccines and keep detailed records of any vaccines received outside of Australia, including dates, product names, and batch numbers.
 - Where possible, take a photo of the vaccine packaging and label.
- Upon returning to Australia, follow up with your healthcare provider to discuss if any additional doses are required.
- People should consider getting pre-exposure rabies vaccination prior to travel. This reduces the number of vaccine doses needed if exposed and simplifies post-exposure prophylaxis.

Important notes:

- Abhyrab® is not available in Australia.
- People **not** affected by this alert include those who:
 - completed their full rabies vaccine course in a country other than India, including Australia;
 - were in India from 1 November 2023 but have evidence that the doses received were a vaccine other than Abhayrab®.
- ATAGI will continue to review the evidence for fake rabies vaccines circulating overseas, and will update this guidance if required.

Further information on rabies pre and post exposure rabies immunisation, including vaccines available in Australia and overseas can be viewed in the [Australian Immunisation Handbook Chapter on rabies and other lyssaviruses](#).

² For example, Vaxirab-N, RABIVAX-S, Lyssavac, Vaxirab, Indirab. See also Australian Immunisation Handbook. 9/10/24. [Table. Rabies vaccines available globally, and compatibility with vaccines registered in Australia | The Australian Immunisation Handbook](#). Accessed 15/12/2025