



Rabbit Hemorrhagic Disease Virus Type 2

Rabbit hemorrhagic disease virus type 2 (RHDV2) is an extremely contagious and fatal virus for rabbits and hares.

Currently, NO cases of this disease have been detected in Michigan, and the virus does NOT affect people or other species of animals.

However, RHDV2 has been identified in other states, and it is vital to take steps to prevent the disease from entering Michigan.

Keeping Germs Away

The best way to prevent RHDV2 is to take measures to keep the virus away from domestic rabbits:

- Avoiding the purchase and/or adoption of rabbits from [areas with RHDV2](#).
- Isolating newly acquired rabbits from other rabbits for at least 30 days.
- Regularly [cleaning and disinfecting](#) all items/surfaces a rabbit has touched.
 - Bleach, Virkon S, and Rescue are all disinfectants effective against RHDV2. Always follow the label's instructions.
- Limiting who has contact with the rabbits.
- Washing your hands before and after handling a rabbit.

- Changing clothes and shoes before and after caring for rabbits.
- Keeping domestic rabbits away from wild rabbits.
- Ensuring a rabbit's feed is not coming from an area that has the virus and not collecting vegetation from outside for a rabbit to eat.
- Controlling for flies and rodents as they could indirectly spread the virus.
- Promptly isolating any ill rabbits and contacting a veterinarian.

Vaccinating Domestic Rabbits

In 2021, a U.S.-based vaccine was made available to protect domestic rabbits from RHDV2. Preliminary data shows the vaccine to be safe and highly effective. In Michigan, the vaccine is only available to, and must be administered by, licensed veterinarians.

Contact your veterinarian regarding vaccinating your rabbits against RHDV2.

If RHDV2 is suspected in domestic rabbits, contact the Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development immediately at 800-292-3939 (daytime) or 517-373-0440 (after-hours).