

## **Prevention - Safeguarding Rabbits From RHD**

- Know where outbreaks are being reported. Sign up for our email notification system by filling out the form in [Subscribe](http://www.vhdcoalition.org/vhdsubscribe.html), <http://www.vhdcoalition.org/vhdsubscribe.html>. If you are not online, make sure you sign up for off-line alert system. In the case of an outbreak, note location. If you are on the East Coast and the outbreak is on the West Coast, your level of concern should not be too high. If it starts spreading then it is time to follow quarantine guidelines as described below.
- Make sure your Vet is aware of RHD. Ask if she is prepared for a possible case. You may end up being your Vet's first alert of an outbreak if she is not on the net. You may also find yourself teaching her about the disease. If you take a rabbit to the vet or have your vet come to your home, ask if the Vet or her staff have had any contact with rabbits, especially rabbits that have died without obvious symptoms. They are not always apparent. Though most Vets are really good about sanitizing areas, extra precautions are needed in the event of a case of RHD. There are great Vets and there are not so great Vets. It is recommended when choosing a Vet to check for cleanliness in kennels and other out of sight areas. In regards to RHD, this becomes imperative.
- Keep rabbits indoors in order to prevent any contact with the outside world. Keep Dogs, Cats and any other Animals who travel outside from contact with your Rabbits. Keep your environment free of insects, Birds, wild Animals, such as Mice, Rats, Opossums, Raccoons. Remove Bird feeders and baths. Make sure garbage cans and areas are secure against scavengers so as not to attract them. Wildlife can easily transport the virus. Screen any windows to keep flies and insects out.
- Avoid contacts of any kind with other Rabbits. Especially during periods when outbreaks are near you. This means, Shows, Pet Stores, Shelters, People, and Equipment. Do not share equipment or allow visitors with out strict sanitation measures. Keep a disinfectant on hand that works for Parvo Viruses or bleach. Follow the directions on the label of commercial disinfectants. Bleach can be diluted by 9 parts of water and must sit on services for ten minutes before rinsing. Remove all feces from cages. The latter part is imperative. After attending shows, keep the rabbits who attended in quarantine for two weeks, and then follow strict sanitation measures. Stay in touch with others who attended so that you can all share info. Keep new rabbits in strict quarantine for two months. Get addresses of those from whom you obtain new rabbits so trace backs can be done if necessary.
- Know your food sources. If you buy local hay, make sure the farmers and distributors do not have rabbits. The same should apply to vegetables.
- Thoroughly sanitize your hands, and change your clothes and shoes before handling your rabbits. If you can, wear latex gloves when you handle the animals. If you consume rabbit meat from outside rabbitries, wear latex gloves while preparing until thoroughly cooked.
- Keep records of who your rabbits have gone to and come from. Tracking infection, or proving that your rabbits have not been exposed may save them from eradication efforts.
- Educate other rabbit people. Education and awareness are the greatest precautionary measures we can take. Share what you know and encourage others to share what they know. Together we can beat this!

**For More Info Regarding RHD and To Join Efforts To Stop This Threat  
Call 1.800.906.2445 or Visit Our Website At [www.vhdcoalition.org](http://www.vhdcoalition.org)**