



CALICI VIRUS (RHDV)

RHDV is often a very swift and sudden killer, giving little warning. Rabbits may die without showing any symptoms at all. **Any sudden rabbit death is suspicious and should be reported to your veterinarian as a possible case of RHDV.**

- The incubation period for
 - RHDV1 is 2-10 days,
 - RHDV2 is 3-9 days.
- The death rate of rabbits exposed to this virus is very high
 - 0 -100% for RHDV1
 - 5-70% for RHDV2.
- Rabbits who survive are carriers and can shed the virus from **30 to possibly 105 days**.
 - Similarly, some rabbits may have little to no symptoms of RHDV2 (subclinical) but may still shed the virus.
- RHDV causes necrotizing hepatitis and may cause necrosis of the spleen. There may be internal or external visible blood haemorrhage. Death occurs from liver failure or haemorrhage due to an impairment in the blood's ability to clot.
- Rabbit calicivirus is a very hardy virus, remaining viable for long periods
 - in the environment for 105 days at 68F on fabric
 - it remains stable for 105 days at room temperature
 - and for 225 days at 39F. It is not killed by freezing
 - it survives heat of 122F for an hour.
 - The virus is spread by direct contact with infected rabbits or infected objects. The virus may also be carried by the wind or by flies, fleas, and mosquitoes.
- There is an annual vaccine available to protect against the calici virus called FILAVAC.

Information Sourced from:

- Alicia McLaughlin, DVM: Co-medical director of the Center for Bird and Exotic Animal Medicine in Bothell, WA 21/4/2020
- House Rabbit Society <https://rabbit.org/rhdv/>