



IT'S TIME TO STAND UP TO INFECTIOUS DISEASES

It's Vaccination Month!

Caring for your horse means protecting it from diseases, and the only way you can protect your horse from Tetanus, Hendra, Strangles and Equine Herpes Virus is by vaccinating against them.

Having a preventative healthcare plan in place provides comprehensive protection from preventable diseases, plus it helps you maintain regular contact with veterinary experts and plan financially for the wellbeing of your horse.

That's why we're encouraging all horse owners to take a stand against infection during our dedicated Vaccination Month.

During the month, we want every horse owner to get advice about infectious diseases affecting horses and the vaccines your horse may require. Ask us – we can advise you about your horse's specific needs.

To help out we've organised vaccination packages for both new Hendra, tetanus and strangles vaccines and for boosters.

Townsville Vet Clinic (TVC) is with every Hendra vaccination including **FREE MICROCHIPPING**.

TVC and YOU can keep track of your horse's health and vaccination status with the online Health4Horses Registry, which will allow you (and us) to log onto your horse's vaccinations to access a combined record. This service also sends reminders when boosters are due!

Simply join Health4Horses.com.au to access the service. IT'S FREE!!!!



We hope to see you soon!



TETANUS

Tetanus is caused by the bacteria *Clostridium tetani*, which is commonly found in manure & soil. When this organism gains entry into the body to an area low in oxygen - such as a puncture wound - it produces a toxin, which migrates to the central nervous system. It can take 5 - 21 days for signs of an infection to occur & is not uncommon for the initial wound to be small & completely healed when signs occur.

Affected horses initially appear stiff, reluctant to move and have difficulty opening their mouth & therefore can not eat. The neck & head then stretch out & the tail may be slightly elevated. As the disease progresses they are unable to swallow & so drool saliva. The third eye-lid comes across the eye - initially in spasms & later permanently.

The horse becomes hypersensitive to sound & will go into rigid spasms when disturbed. Eventually the respiratory muscles are affected making breathing difficult; the horse becomes progressively exhausted, collapses & dies.

Treatment is possible in very early cases but is prolonged & therefore expensive. Advanced cases require euthanasia to prevent a very painful death.

This disease may be prevented in two ways. Because the initial wound may be small & go unnoticed - vaccination is the recommended method.

Vaccination gives year-round protection & requires two injections a month apart followed by yearly boosters. Unvaccinated horses that are wounded may be treated with a short-acting "antitoxin" that will give protection for 2-3 weeks only.

Hendra Virus

What do I look for in my horse? Hendra virus can cause a broad range of signs in horses. Hendra virus infection should be considered in any sick horse when the cause of illness is unknown and particularly where there is rapid onset of illness, fever, increased heart rate and rapid deterioration associated with either respiratory or neurological signs.

Occasionally, horses will survive Hendra virus infection. Hendra virus is much more likely to occur in a single sick or dead horse rather than in a number of horses.

On several occasions one or more companion horses became infected after close contact with the first infected horse prior to or at the time of death. It appears that Hendra virus has the potential to spread to other horses either through direct contact with infectious body fluids, or through indirect contact via contaminated equipment that could transfer body fluid from one horse to another.

The **following signs** have all been associated with Hendra virus cases, but not all of these signs will be found in any one infected horse:

- rapid onset of illness
- increased body temperature/fever
- increased heart rate
- discomfort/weight shifting between legs
- depression
- rapid deterioration.

Respiratory signs include:

- respiratory distress
- increased respiratory rates
- nasal discharge at death—can be initially clear, progressing to stable white froth and/or stable blood-stained froth.

Neurological signs include:

- 'wobbly gait'
- apparent loss of vision in one or both eyes
- aimless walking in a dazed state
- head tilting and circling
- muscle twitching
- urinary incontinence
- inability to rise.

See our website for more information