

EHM and EHV-1

Protect your horse from Equine Herpesvirus Myeloencephalopathy



Equine Herpes Virus (EHV)

Equine Herpes Viruses are a very common family of viruses found in horses across the world. Most horses will be exposed to and infected with a strain of herpes virus and have no serious or long-lasting side effects.

There are 9 strains of EHV. The two most common strains are EHV-1 and EHV-4.

EHV-1 disease manifestations include respiratory disease, abortion, neonatal death, and the neurological form.

EHV-4 commonly causes respiratory disease and rarely causes neurological disease or abortion.

EHV-1 EHM outbreaks are sporadic and situations can develop rapidly. To follow EHM outbreaks, visit the Equine Disease Communication Center website:



EHV-1 and EHM

When EHM is caused by EHV-1 it is reportable in the US.

EHV-1 EHM is rare. It is typically caused by a mutation in the virus or a neuropathogenic strain.

These cases may only affect one horse. Or they may be contagious - affecting multiple exposed horses.

These cases may be connected to other EHV-1 outbreaks. Or they can be due to a spontaneous mutation in the virus and not be outbreak related.

Common Symptoms of EHM:

Fever – Temp of 101.5 F or higher

Lethargy

Discharge from nose or eyes

Swelling of the legs

Trouble walking – lack of coordination or weakness, in the hind legs especially.

Dribbling urine

Penile paralysis

Head tilt



How is EHV-1 spread?

- Horse to horse: Contact with nasal discharge or inhaling aerosolized respiratory droplets.
- Horses coming in contact with contaminated surfaces such as stalls, buckets, brushes or trailers.
- Humans can spread the virus by contaminated hands or clothing.
- Infected horses may not show any clinical signs or have any visible symptoms! These horses can still act as carriers for the virus and infect other horses.

Protect your horse!

- Do not travel with your horse during active outbreaks.
- Minimize transmission: prevent horses coming into contact with infected horses or contaminated equipment, surfaces, or people.
- Clean and disinfect equipment including boots, tack, buckets.

Biosecurity Resources:



Owners: If your horse shows symptoms consistent with EHM, please contact your veterinarian immediately!

If you suspect your horse may have been exposed at one of the equine events connected to the current outbreak, even you don't see any symptoms, please give us a call **(919) 707-3250**. Owners of horses that may have been exposed to horses with EHV-1 EHM should work with their veterinarian to establish appropriate protocols.

Veterinarians: EHV-1 EHM is reportable in the United States.

If you have a patient with acute neurologic symptoms, please call our office: **(919) 707-3250**. Even after hours your call will be returned as soon as possible. We will provide guidance on isolation and testing for EHV-1.