



We hope each of you have enjoyed the seasonal festivities and are now looking forward to 2023! It's a commanding subject, but, in this newsletter, we would like to bring EHV to your attention.

January 2023

Newsletter



## Equine Herpes Virus

Equine Herpes Virus (EHV) is a contagious viral infection which can cause respiratory disease, abortions and neurological disease.

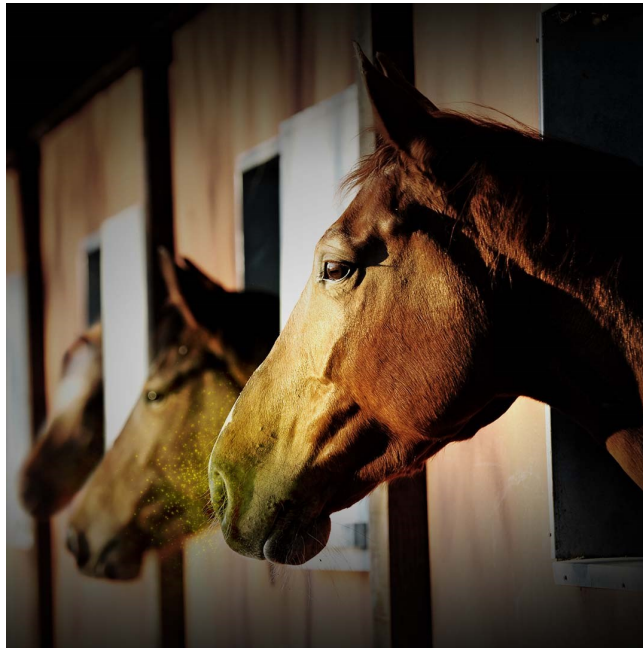
There are six different types, but the two which typically cause disease in horses are:

**EHV-1** This type is less common for respiratory disease, but it can cause the more severe effects of abortion and neurological disease.

**EHV-4** This type commonly causes respiratory disease.

### Symptoms include:

- Nasal discharge
- Coughing
- Swollen glands
- Lethargy
- Inappetence
- Depression
- Pyrexia up to 41 degrees
- A dry intermittent cough
- Reduced athletic performance



**Pregnant mares can abort without demonstrating any clinical signs at all.**

EHV can take weeks to recover from and can have an impact on a horse's athletic career for months.

### Neurological clinical signs can include:

- Paralysis
- Collapse
- Abnormal behaviour

Once a horse has been infected, they carry EHV for the rest of their life, the majority catching it from their dams in the first 6 weeks after birth. As a result 80-90% of the horse population in the UK carries EHV. These horse's can all shed the virus without showing clinical signs. This reactivation and shedding can occur whenever a horse is stressed, for example, with travelling, or moving yards.

[summerleaze@summerleaze-vets.co.uk](mailto:summerleaze@summerleaze-vets.co.uk) 01297 304 007

SUMMERLEAZE-VETS.CO.UK

01297 304007

## EHV Q&A

### Can EHV be fatal?

Neurological EHV can be fatal, particularly if the horse hasn't been vaccinated for EHV. The disease can also have a long term impact on the horse's athletic career.

### If a mare has previously aborted with EHV, are they likely to abort again?

There is no evidence to suggest that a mare who has previously aborted due to EHV, will be any higher risk than another mare. However, it is important **not** to expose other pregnant broodmares to any mare that has recently aborted, due to EHV, as they may also abort.

### How can I stop my horse getting EHV?

It is impossible to completely eliminate your horse's exposure to EHV, however, there are steps you can undertake to reduce your horse's exposure and minimise their risk.

### Reducing Risk

- You can reduce exposure to EHV by minimising contact with other horses. It is also important to lessen any impact of stress, for example, minimising long journeys travelling, or being stabled without friends for extended lengths of time.
- Young horses going through periods of stress, such as weaning, should be kept separate from other groups, as they are at high risk of developing and spreading EHV.
- Isolate new horses for a month on arrival and monitor their temperatures.
- Horses competing at FEI are required to have their temperature monitored prior to competing and, whilst at the competition, to reduce the risk of EHV spread.

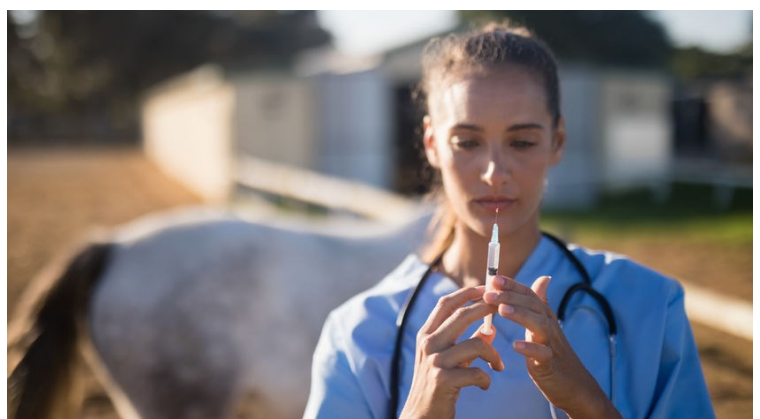
**If you have any questions regarding EHV, then please do not hesitate to call us for a chat**

**01297 304007**



### Vaccination

- You can vaccinate your horse for EHV. This reduces the impact if your horse is exposed to EHV and, the amount they shed to other horses.
- The vaccination doesn't stop the virus, but it lessens the clinical signs and, reduces the overall impact of the disease.
- EHV vaccinations should be given every 6 months, after an initial two vaccinations, one month apart.
- The vaccination doesn't guarantee to stop abortions for broodmares, but does reduce the risk and, the risk of abortion storms in groups of broodmares.
- Broodmares should be vaccinated at the 5th, 7th and 9th month of pregnancy.



Summerleaze Equine Vets, Axminster, EX13 7RA 01297 304007

[summerleaze@summerleaze-vets.co.uk](mailto:summerleaze@summerleaze-vets.co.uk)