

**So what are the most common diseases to vaccinate against?  
Vaccinations are vital in reducing your horses risk to disease.**

## What is influenza?

A virus spread by aerosol – i.e. coughing and sneezing. Once inhaled it attaches to the cells that line the respiratory tract, damaging its sensitive lining and the small hairs (cilia) which usually help to sweep the mucous up away from the lungs. This damage, caused by the virus, can allow secondary bacteria to invade the damaged respiratory tract, resulting in a worsening of the clinical signs experienced. The incubation period for the disease is 1-3 days with clinical signs such as raised temperature, lethargy, nasal discharge, deep dry cough to name a few.

## Diagnosis

The diagnosis of equine influenza requires investigation, as the clinical signs exhibited are also experienced in other types of infectious respiratory disease. Diagnosis is based on clinical signs and a rapid spread in a group of horses. Nasal swabs for PCR and/or virus isolation are most commonly performed to make a diagnosis. Other diagnostic tests include tracheal washes for PCR/virus isolation or paired blood samples taken 14 days apart.

## Treatment

There is no specific treatment for equine influenza. Good hydration, rest and anti-inflammatory drugs, such as phenylbutazone (Bute) form the mainstays of treatment. Affected horses should be isolated to avoid further spread.

## What is tetanus?

Tetanus is the name given to a potentially fatal infection caused by the bacteria *Clostridium tetani*. These bacteria live in the soil and can contaminate wounds, releasing a neurotoxin (tetanospasmin). This neurotoxin acts on the nerves supplying skeletal muscle, causing the muscles to go into a rigid spasm (tetany). Ultimately, this can result in failure of the muscles involved in breathing, resulting in death. Horses are amongst the most sensitive of mammals to this infection.

## Diagnosis

Infected horses appear very rigid and usually have prolapsed third eye lids, a wide-eyed stare and have their tail held out.

## Treatment

There are very few treatment options and treatment is often unsuccessful.



Horse suffering tetanus infection

## What is Equine Herpes Virus?

EHV is a common virus, which occurs in horse populations world wide and is endemic in the U.K.

There are many different types of herpes virus in the horse, but the two most commonly seen types of EHV are EHV-1 and EHV-4.

Typically EHV-1 causes respiratory disease in young horses, abortion in pregnant mares and paralysis in horses of all ages.

EHV-4 usually only causes low-grade respiratory disease, but it can, in rare circumstances, cause abortion.



## What is strangles disease?

Strangles is a widespread, highly infectious, debilitating disease of horses, which is caused by a bacterium called *Streptococcus equi*. Strangles is considered to be the most commonly diagnosed infectious disease affecting horses of all sizes, breeds, types and ages. Direct contact between horses is the most common factor, but spread of the disease is also via contaminated food, drinking vessels or equipment including peoples' clothing.



For further information, see the Strangles fact sheet.

**Vaccinations are an important part of preventative health planning, with appropriate vaccination helping to protect your horse from several important, sometimes life-threatening diseases. We can vaccinate against all of the above to reduce the risk to our horses.**

**All vaccinations require a primary course which varies depending on the vaccine being administered, with ALL vaccines logged in your horses passport.**