



WENSUM VALLEY VETS NEWSLETTER

Equine Influenza Update

There is currently a reported increase in cases of Equine Influenza (flu) across UK, including the East of England, and this serves as an important reminder of how vital vaccination is in protecting your horse and the wider equine community. Vaccination remains one of the most effective ways to reduce the risk of infection and limit the severity of disease if your horse is exposed. Even horses that do not travel regularly can still be at risk.

As a minimum we recommend you check that your horse is up to date with their annual vaccinations

What is Equine Influenza?

Equine flu is a highly contagious respiratory (breathing) virus that can spread rapidly between horses through the air, direct contact, shared equipment, via people moving between yards and even 2km on the wind. Symptoms may include:

- High temperature
- Coughing
- Nasal discharge
- Lethargy
- Reduced performance

Why are some horses at increased risk of Equine Flu?

- Young horses (under 5 years) - their immune systems are still developing and they may not have had a full course of vaccinations yet
- Unvaccinated horses - no protection means higher chance of infection and spread



Horses that travel frequently - competitions, sales, and yard moves increase exposure

Horses in busy environments - livery yards, riding schools, and attending events can facilitate rapid transmission

New arrivals to a yard - especially if vaccination history is unclear

Why Biosecurity Matters

Respiratory infections like Strangles, Equine Flu and Equine Herpes Virus are highly contagious and spread easily through shared equipment, hands, clothing, droplets, close contact between horses and in the air. Good biosecurity doesn't just protect one horse - it protects the whole yard.



When Horses Arrive or Return

When you bring new horses on to a yard or return from a show or event, this is when biosecurity matters most!

- Ideally isolate new or returning horses for 7-21 days
- Check temperatures daily and watch for respiratory signs
- Avoid shared water/feed sources until health status is confirmed
- Keep their equipment separate while they go through quarantine
- A short period of isolation can prevent a long outbreak - so it's worth the effort!
- **If you need help making a biosecurity plan for your yard please let us know**



Please call us if:

- *You are concerned your horse is showing signs of flu*
- *You are unsure of your horse's vaccination status*
- *You would like help making a biosecurity plan for your yard*
- *Or if you have any other questions*

You can reach us on 01328 864444



