

# Insights in VETERINARY MEDICINE



## AAEP Guidelines for the Vaccination of Horses<sup>1</sup>

The American Association of Equine Practitioners (AAEP) classifies West Nile virus, Eastern/Western equine encephalomyelitis, tetanus and rabies as “core” vaccines that should be administered to all horses. [See AAEP recommendations in blue text below.](#)



### Core diseases

- **West Nile virus** – A widespread mosquito-borne, neurological disease that can kill approximately one in three clinically affected horses.<sup>2</sup> [Horses should be vaccinated annually prior to the onset of the mosquito season. Consider semi-annual vaccination for horses in endemic areas, horses younger than five or older than 15, and horses with compromised immune systems.](#)
- **Eastern Equine Encephalomyelitis (EEE)** – A mosquito-borne disease that can kill 75 to 90 percent of affected horses.<sup>3</sup> [Horses should be vaccinated annually. Consider semi-annual vaccination for horses in endemic areas or with compromised immune systems.](#)
- **Western Equine Encephalomyelitis (WEE)** – Another potentially fatal, mosquito-borne disease found primarily west of the Mississippi River.<sup>3</sup> [Horses should be vaccinated annually. Consider semi-annual vaccination for horses in endemic areas or with compromised immune systems.](#)
- **Tetanus** – An often-fatal disease caused by the bacterium *Clostridium tetani* found in soil and feces. [All horses should be vaccinated annually.](#)
- **Rabies** – An invariably fatal neurological disease caused by the bite of infected animal. [All horses should be vaccinated annually.](#)

### Risk-based diseases

For non-core diseases, the risk of infection varies from horse to horse. Your veterinarian will recommend disease protection based on a risk assessment for *your* horse, and the disease threats in *your* area. Two common risk-based diseases include equine influenza and equine herpesvirus.

- **Equine influenza** – A highly contagious respiratory disease that causes fever, coughing and nasal discharge. [Vaccinate low-risk horses annually, and high-risk horses semi-annually.](#)
- **Equine herpesvirus (EHV)** – Also known as rhinopneumonitis, EHV type 1 and EHV type 4 can cause fever, lethargy, nasal discharge and cough. [Vaccinate horses annually. Consider semi-annual vaccination for horses less than five years old, horses on breeding far performance/show horses at high risk.](#)



## AAEP vaccination guidelines for broodmares.

The American Association of Equine Practitioners (AAEP) classifies West Nile virus, Eastern/Western equine encephalomyelitis, tetanus and rabies as “core” vaccines that should be administered to all horses, including broodmares. *See AAEP recommendations in blue text below.*



### Core diseases

- **West Nile virus** – A widespread mosquito-borne, neurological disease that can kill approximately one in three clinically affected horses.<sup>2</sup> *Booster previously-vaccinated broodmares annually, four to six weeks pre-partum.*
- **Eastern Equine Encephalomyelitis (EEE)** – A mosquito-borne, neurological disease that can kill 75 to 90 percent of affected horses.<sup>3</sup> *Broodmares should be vaccinated annually, four to six weeks pre-partum. Consider semi-annual vaccination for mares in endemic areas or with compromised immune systems.*
- **Western Equine Encephalomyelitis (WEE)** – Another potentially fatal, mosquito-borne, neurological disease. *Broodmares should be vaccinated annually, four to six weeks pre-partum. Consider semi-annual vaccination for mares in endemic areas or with compromised immune systems.*
- **Tetanus** – An often-fatal disease caused by the bacterium *Clostridium tetani* found in soil and feces. *Booster previously-vaccinated broodmares annually, four to six weeks pre-partum.*
- **Rabies** – An invariably fatal neurological disease caused by the bite of infected animal. *Due to the relatively long duration of protection, this vaccine may be administered once a year, after foaling but prior to breeding.*

### Risk-based diseases

For non-core diseases, the risk of infection varies from mare to mare, and from farm to farm. Three common risk-based diseases include equine influenza, equine herpesvirus and equine viral arteritis.

- **Equine influenza** – A highly contagious respiratory disease that causes fever, coughing and nasal discharge. *Booster previously-vaccinated broodmares annually, four to six weeks pre-partum.*
- **Equine herpesvirus (EHV)** – Also known as rhinopneumonitis, EHV type 1 and EHV type 4 can cause fever, lethargy, nasal discharge and cough. EHV type 1 also can cause abortions in pregnant mares. *Vaccinate broodmares at five, seven and nine months of gestation with a product labeled for protection against EHV abortion.*
- **Equine viral arteritis (EVA)** – Transmitted via respiratory secretions or infected semen, EVA can cause abortions in pregnant mares and death in young foals. *Vaccinate all stallions and broodmares at risk. Stallions should be tested and confirmed negative for EVA prior to initial vaccination.*

1. AAEP Guidelines for the Vaccination of Horses. Available at: [http://www.aaep.org/vaccination\\_guidelines.htm](http://www.aaep.org/vaccination_guidelines.htm). Accessed August 20, 2010.

2. Schuler, LA., et al. Evaluation of an outbreak of West Nile virus infection in horses: 569 cases (2002). *J AM Vet Med Assoc.* 2004 Oct 1;225(7):1084-9.

3. Sellnow, L. Encephalitis: Many Causes, Deadly Outcome. *The Horse*, July 1, 2004; article #1516. Available at: <http://www.thehorse.com/Print.aspx?ID=1516>. Accessed August 20, 2010.

**FORT DODGE** vaccines from Pfizer Animal Health

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