

# Recommendations for Examinations and Vaccinations

- 1) **Physical Exam:** It is important to have your veterinarian perform a yearly physical exam on your horse. If needed she can evaluate and recommend different feeding or management programs for your horse's health needs.
- 2) **Coggins' Test:** This is a blood test for a deadly disease called Equine Infectious Anemia. It is required by law to have a current (within the last year) negative Coggins' test if your horse leaves your property, if you have horses owned by different owners at one facility, or if you buy or sell a horse.
- 3) **Vaccinations:**  
Vaccinations work by stimulating the immune system against a particular virus twice over a 3-6 week period if the horse has never had a particular vaccination series before. We recommend performing a two shot series for each vaccine if the vaccination status of your horse is unknown. See also individual disease handouts.

## **West Nile:**

- vaccinate every 6 months
- neurologic disease carried by birds and transmitted by mosquitoes that can be deadly
- not contagious from horse to horse
- strongly recommended

## **Rabies:**

- yearly vaccine
- human health risk
- highly contagious by contact
- strongly recommended

## **Encephalitis (EEE, WEE):**

- vaccinate every 6 months
- encephalitis (sleeping sickness) is deadly
- carried by mosquitos and biting flies
- strongly recommended

## **Tetanus (Lockjaw):**

- vaccinate every 6 months
- life threatening
- found in the ground-horse does not have to go anywhere to contract this disease
- strongly recommended

**Influenza:**

- vaccinate every 3-6 months in high risk situations
- viral respiratory infection
- contagious from horse to horse
- recommended for horses at a higher risk (going to shows, boarding at a large barn)

**Rhinopneumonitis:**

- vaccinate every 3-6 months in high risk situations
- viral respiratory infection
- contagious from horse to horse
- recommended for horses at a higher risk (going to shows, boarding at a large barn)
- This also has a form that causes abortion and should be vaccinated against during pregnancy at 5, 7, and 9 months of gestation

**Strangles:**

- vaccinate every 6-12 months
- bacterial respiratory infection
- highly contagious from horse to horse and horses can shed the bacteria without appearing sick for up to 6mo after infection.
- recommended for horses at high risk in a barn with a history of strangles or traveling to an area, show, or trail ride where strangles may be prevalent

**4) Deworming:**

There are many different dewormers on the market. We recommend administering a dewormer about every two months based on fecal examinations. However, it is important to rotate between the different types to cover a broad spectrum of parasites. See deworming handout for specific recommendations.

**5) Dentistry:**

Horses' teeth continue to grow throughout their lives and can get very sharp points that can irritate the mouth. Because of this, they need routine dental care. We recommend a yearly dental for horses that do not have any problems and more often as needed for horses who may have problem mouths. It is important to have your veterinarian check your horse's teeth yearly to see if the teeth need floating.

**6) Hoof trimming:**

Routine hoof trimming is important for the hoof care of your horse. Horses generally need their feet trimmed every 6-8 weeks. Additionally, some horses have thin soles or a medical/anatomical condition that requires they wear horseshoes. We can recommend a farrier at our visit. It is very important to find a farrier who meets your needs as well as your horses' needs.

7) **Sheath cleaning:**

Male horses, especially geldings, usually need a little help with hygiene and it is recommended that their sheaths be cleaned once a year. Most horses resist this and need sedation. During the cleaning, the veterinarian can also do a thorough exam of the penis and sheath to check for any problems like cancerous growths that commonly occur in this area as well as remove the “bean” before it becomes large enough to interfere with urination. It is very convenient to schedule this at the same time as their yearly dentistry and take advantage of the tranquilized state.