

## Everyday biosecurity actions:

- U Maintain good hygiene (e.g. washing hands, disinfecting clothes, equipment & surfaces).
- U Use separate grooming kits, rugs and tack for each horse.
- U Use separate feed and water buckets.
- U Regularly clean grooming kit, feed and water buckets, tack, rugs, stables and vehicles.
- U Avoid taking vehicles into a yard where there are sick horses.
- U Keep horses secure: check latches/hinges.
- U Provide fresh clean water and the appropriate type and amount of fodder.
- U Do not share needles, syringes or scalpels.

## Attending events and shows:

- U Take your own buckets.
- U Avoid nose-to-nose contact between horses.
- U Wash your hands after handling other horses.
- U Clean, then disinfect, your boots and outer clothing after each show.
- U Be aware of horses at the yard or stables that may have been exposed to disease (e.g. at shows or events) and speak to your vet if you have any concerns.

## Getting a new horse:

- U Learn the horse's history and ensure it has a valid passport.
- U Ensure all vaccinations are up to date (e.g. equine flu, tetanus).
- U Know the health status of the premises where the horse was kept previously.
- U Consider having your horse checked by a vet prior to purchase.
- U Isolate new horses for at least 21 days.
- U If in doubt, talk to your vet.

## Useful contacts and further information:

World Horse Welfare, Keep Your Horse Healthy pack: [www.worldhorsewelfare.org/advice/health/disease-prevention](http://www.worldhorsewelfare.org/advice/health/disease-prevention)

Scottish Government, Code of Practice for the Welfare of Equidae: [www.gov.scot/Publications/2009/04/30154411/0](http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2009/04/30154411/0)

British Horse Society Scotland, Strategy to eradicate and prevent Strangles: [www.bhsscotland.org.uk/strangles.html](http://www.bhsscotland.org.uk/strangles.html)

Subscribe to APHA Alerts Service: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/apha-alert-subscription-service>

Horseracing Betting and Levy Board, Codes of Practice: <https://codes.hblb.org.uk/>

Find your local APHA office and sign up to receive text or email disease alerts: [www.gov.uk/apha](http://www.gov.uk/apha)

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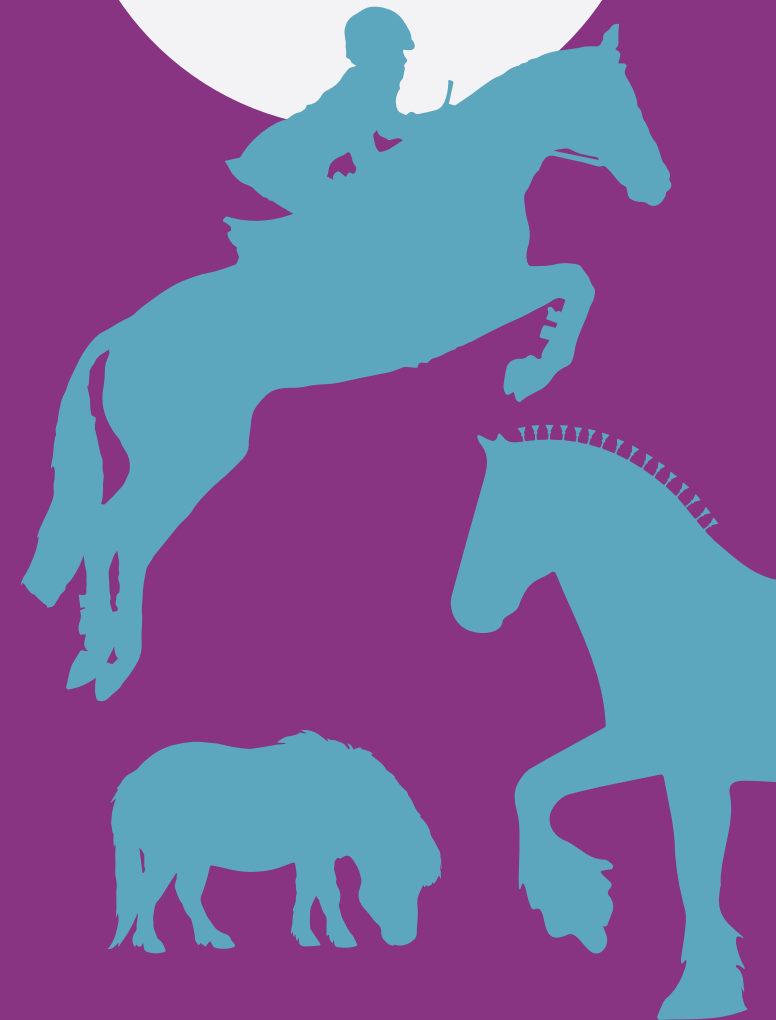
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 RuralMattersScotland

ISBN: 978-1-83960-697-7 (web only)

Notifiable  
Equine Diseases

Biosecurity  
information for  
equine keepers



Scottish Government  
Riaghaltas na h-Alba  
gov.scot

**Biosecurity** is a set of management practices that reduces the potential for the introduction or spread of disease-causing agents.

Maintaining good biosecurity practices will help prevent the introduction and spread of diseases (e.g. strangles or equine influenza) and reduce costs by keeping your animal healthy.

Remain vigilant for signs and symptoms of disease by checking your horse daily. Horse keepers should know their horse's normal behaviour and vital signs; changes may indicate the onset of disease.

### If you suspect your horse is unwell:

- U Isolate the horse and call your vet.
- U Inform keepers of any other horses on the premises.
- U Wear suitable protective clothing that can be washed and disinfected or disposed of.

If you or your vet suspect **notifiable disease** you must report it to APHA immediately!



An **exotic notifiable disease** is one not normally present in the UK. A **notifiable disease** is a disease that must be reported to the Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA) because of their potential for serious and rapid spread, consequences for animal or public health, or impact on international trade.

Provided below are information and key facts on three equine diseases which are notifiable in Scotland. It is important that you not only **take steps to prevent disease, but also consider what steps you will take** should your horse, or another equine at your yard, become infected with a notifiable disease.

### Equine Infectious Anaemia (EIA)

or 'Swamp Fever' is a viral infection spread by large biting flies (i.e. horse or stable flies). It can also be transmitted via blood, contaminated surgical equipment, reused syringes or needles, and through placental transmission to foals.

#### Key facts of EIA in horses:

- U Symptoms include recurring fever, anaemia, emaciation and death.
- U Animals may be affected acutely, chronically, or show mild or no symptoms.
- U Incubation period varies from days to months, but is generally 1-3 weeks.
- U All infected horses become carriers and can be infectious for life.
- U The chronic phase of the disease predisposes horses to secondary infection for the rest of their lives.
- U Positive confirmation is obtained by laboratory testing of a blood sample.

### African Horse Sickness (AHS)

is a viral infection spread by biting midges. Horses that recover from AHS have life-long immunity to that particular strain. The clinical signs will vary between the different forms of the virus.

#### Key Facts of AHS in horses:

- U **Respiratory form symptoms:**  
High fever, difficulty breathing, mouth open and head hanging down, frothy discharge from nose, sudden death, death rate 90%.
- U **Cardiac form symptoms:**  
Fever, swelling of head and eyes, loss of ability to swallow and possible colic symptoms, pinpoint bleeding in the membranes of mouth and eyes, slow onset of death, death rate 60%.
- U **Mixed form symptoms:**  
Mild respiratory signs, swelling of head and eyes.
- U Incubation period 2-14 days.
- U Positive confirmation is obtained by laboratory testing of a blood sample.

### West Nile Virus (WNV)

is a viral infection spread by mosquitoes. Horses cannot pass the disease onto animals or humans.

#### Key facts of WNV in horses:

- U Around 30% of cases exhibit symptoms.
- U Mild symptoms include loss of appetite and stumbling.
- U Severe cases may result in extreme neurological symptoms and paralysis, leading to death.
- U Incubation period 5-15 days.
- U Positive confirmation is obtained by laboratory testing of a blood sample.
- U Vaccine is available, ask your vet.

