

Vet

IMOGEN BURROWS

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The importance of vaccinations



Can I stop all vaccines if I don't take my horse anywhere or take him away from the yard?

Fiona Scott, Cambridgeshire



Vaccinations are an integral part of preventative care for your horse. Influenza and tetanus are both potentially fatal, but preventable diseases and any horse may come into contact with either disease, despite not leaving the yard. As such, it's always sensible to ensure your horse's vaccinations stay up to date, and provide additional boosters should an outbreak occur near your yard.

Most owners vaccinate their horses and ponies with a combined vaccination that provides protection against both tetanus and flu. Tetanus is a disease caused by the toxin from the bacteria, *Clostridium tetanii*.

This bacteria is found within the environment, for example within soil or on rusty metal objects, so any horse is at risk of developing it.

Influenza is a viral disease caused by the orthomyxovirus, equine influenza A. Much like human influenza, the virus is constantly changing to evade the immunity acquired from previous exposure or vaccination. As a consequence of this, vaccine strains are updated to provide your horse with the best protection.

The influenza virus is also spread through the air, so infection can occur without body to body contact.

Get rid of pinworms



My horse has been diagnosed with pinworm, but wormers haven't touched them. What can I do?

Claire Pensen, Nottingham



Pinworm infestation can be tricky to clear. These are small, round worms that have developed a very clever lifecycle. Oral worming products will kill the worm when they come into contact with it. However, as the adult worm moves through the intestine it rarely touches the gut wall, so is not exposed to the wormer.

The female worms lay millions of eggs externally around the anus and perineal region. Targeting this area with topical treatment over consecutive days will greatly help treatment. Oral wormers containing ivermectin can be applied as a cream around the anus and surrounding area every day for 10-14 days. Alternatively, your vet can prescribe a liquid solution to sponge onto this area for the same time period.



Vaccines protect your horse from a wide range of diseases