



## Rolling Meadows Animal Hospital Equine News Letter

January 2007

### Why Should We Vaccinate?

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Many people try to save money by not vaccinating. I can understand this fully. A person must budget. Sometimes though, this can lead to a major wreck.

*An example is a 4H hopeful who goes to a fun show. The horse is vaccinated for the basics -- West Nile, Tetanus and Sleeping Sickness. One horse at the show happens to be shedding influenza or strangles or rhino -- within a week the horse is infected. Maybe they are lucky and the infection clears itself. Then again, maybe the horse develops pneumonia and ends up with a \$800.00 bill. There is also the possibility the horse could die. (I have had horses die from complications of all three diseases in the last two months.) If the horse is lucky it just misses a few shows.*

*Another example is a horse going into training. You are going to be spending \$600.00 plus per month. You just vaccinate for West Nile, Tetanus and Sleeping Sickness as before and the horse next to yours touches noses over the stall (or just exhales the virus out into the aisle). A week later you are in the same exact situation. Your sick horse is not only costing you money for treatment, but you are losing the training time. (Many of these horses need to be rested for weeks.) For less than \$0.50 a day you could have protected your horse from influenza, strangles and rhino, and there would not be a contract out on your life because of the other sick horses in the barn that are costing the trainer and their owners money.*

There are a million examples we could use -- *the barrel race you've been waiting for that is going to get you that new trailer, that futurity you've been getting ready for--* remember, stress plays an important part in the outbreak of disease. Increasing the immunity can help prevent the outbreak.

Alright, you say, I'll vaccinate, what do I need to do? Be sure the vaccine is timed correctly. One dose of Strangles vaccine at the beginning of the show season will help prevent strangles.

We usually vaccinate in the spring for influenza/rhino, then booster again every 2 -3 months for the best immunity. **TRY TO TIME THESE WITH YOUR MAJOR SHOWS!!**  
(example--4H should booster 2- 4 weeks before the fair show.)

If you worry about keeping track of this, let us do it. Just let us know and we will put your horse into our special reminder system. When it is time for the booster, we call you to set an appointment time, and then take care of the vaccinations. If your horse is at a trainer or being boarded, just tell us and we can set it up with the barn manager.

Check out the AAEP recommendations on vaccine schedules at <http://www.adrianvet.com/aaepvac.pdf> . You can join our e-mailing list and receive a free report on Equine Diseases at [www.adrianvet.com/news.htm#Curious\\_about\\_equine\\_disease](http://www.adrianvet.com/news.htm#Curious_about_equine_disease) .

## KEY POINTS TO REMEMBER ABOUT VACCINATIONS

1. Vaccines are made to provide protection for a specific period of time. You are giving yourself false security if you don't follow the rules. See our link for vaccination recommendations.

| Vaccines         | Length Immunity   |
|------------------|-------------------|
| Tetanus          | 1 year            |
| West Nile        | 6 months - 1 year |
| Rhinopneumonitis | 2 - 3 months      |
| Rabies           | 1 year            |
| EEE, WEE         | 6 - 9 months      |
| Strangles        | 6 months - 1 year |
| Influenza        | 3-6 months        |

2. Most vaccines try to convert a clinical infection to a sub-clinical infection. Just because your horse is vaccinated does not mean it is not carrying an infection. Vaccinating the one horse you haul to a show will help that horse. But if that horse comes into contact with a horse shedding an infection, he can bring the infection back to all your other horses.

3. Horses do not have to be showing any signs to shed infection.

4. Stress can induce a horse to shed infection. Strangles and Rhino are two diseases that we see show up very commonly due to stress. (example: A horse is put into training then breaks with strangles.)

5. You have better immunity as herd immunity than as individual immunity. This means if you vaccinate all your horses, any individual would be less likely contract disease than if it was the only one vaccinated.

6. Vaccination needs time to work. Vaccination actually depresses the immune system initially, so animals may be more prone to infection. Vaccinate at least 10 days before hauling if possible to avoid stressing the animal.

If you have any further questions, please give us a call at 816-297-2006.

Thanks for stopping by ...*Randy*