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INFLUENZA - Common Equine Respiratory Disease

Influenza is a common viral respiratory disease usually occurring in the spring and fall. Influenza has a short incubation period of one to three days, and can spread rapidly through a group of susceptible horses.

Clinical signs seen with influenza include fever, anorexia, depression, coughing, and some horses appear to have muscle soreness. In the severe cases, horses can develop a generalized vasculitis which appears as swelling of the limbs, inflammation of the heart resulting in a high heart rate and inflammation of the eye with tearing and squinting.

It can take a horse's respiratory tract three to four weeks to recover from damage done by influenza virus infection. It is important to rest a horse after infection with this virus. A general rule of thumb is to rest the horse one week for every one day that it had a fever. Vaccination can be helpful in preventing illness, and/or reducing the severity of infection. The vaccination schedule recommended will vary with risk of exposure to the virus and with the type of vaccine product administered.

Additional information (OCES Fact Sheets) – *Respiratory Diseases in Horses* and *Equine Vaccination Program* at osufacts.okstate.edu or call CVHS Veterinary Extension office (405) 744-7672. To schedule an appointment with the Center for Veterinary Health Sciences Equine Clinic call (405) 744-6656.



Veterinarians Committed to Excellence in Horse Health Care – CVHS Equine Specialists

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