

Care For Your Equine Friends

Abraham's Equine Clinic

I. ROUTINE MAINTENANCE:

- A. **Shoeing** – **Every 6 to 8 weeks:** Choose a farrier that is dependable, educated and knowledgeable. We recommend that your horse be shod or trimmed every 6 to 8 weeks. Frequency will depend on the individual horse's rate of hoof growth, the health of their feet, the kind and amount of work they do, and the type of shoeing. One of the most common causes of lameness in your horse is man made.
- B. **Teeth** – **Annually:** Unlike human teeth, a horse's teeth continue to grow throughout its lifetime. They therefore require continual maintenance. We recommend that your horse's teeth be worked on at least once a year. If they have problems or have reached age 15, it may need to be done more often. We make an oral exam a routine part of our spring and fall "tune-up" program.
- C. **Sheath** - **Annually:** This should be thoroughly cleaned under tranquilization, once a year – may require twice annually. Some horses may allow you to clean their penis and sheath to some extent on a more regular basis without tranquilization.
- D. **Coggins Test** – **Annually:** Equine Infectious Anemia (EIA) is a serious disease transmitted by biting insects like the mosquito. There is no cure and no vaccine available against this disease. Blood should be drawn for a Coggins test to detect its presence. Each state has different requirements and some interstate travel or horse shows may require proof of a negative test within the past 6 months. You will receive a lab sheet providing proof of a negative Coggins test. This should be required for any sale horses, for transporting horses over state lines, or for a show horse's entrance into competition. Please consult with your veterinarian on requirements for your area.
- E. **De-worming** – **Every 8 to 12 Weeks:** When a horse carries excessive parasites, it can be a serious health hazard. Parasites can contribute to colic, diarrhea, weight loss, listlessness, loss of appetite, coughing, anemia and other indications of generally poor health such a poor coat condition and a "pot bellied" appearance. We strongly recommend that your horse be dewormed every 8 – 12 weeks depending upon horse traffic exposure. You should discuss the most effective deworming program for your individual situation with your veterinarian.

II. VACCINATIONS:

- A. **Tetanus** – **Annually:** This is a neurological disease. Horses should initially receive 2 doses over a 3 to 4 week interval, then an annual booster. This is an important vaccination in preventative care, and no horse should be left unprotected. Tetanus is generally a fatal disease. The efficacy of this vaccine is very high.
- B. **Rhino/Flu (Rhinopneumonitis / Influenza)** – **1 – 6 times per year:** This vaccination combats respiratory diseases and may be recommended 1 to 6 times per year depending on the horse's lifestyle. Twice a year may be enough for the backyard horse that never leaves home. Breeding barns may be advised to vaccinate every 2 – 3 months to protect mares. Show horses who come in contact with many horses whose health history is unknown, or those prone to allergic or respiratory problems, may also be advised to vaccinate more frequently. Speak to your veterinarian about your horse's needs. Influenza is the most common cause of respiratory disease in the horse.

II. VACCINATIONS (continued)

- C. **Potomac Horse Fever (PHF)** – **Annually**: PHF is an important vaccine that had been recommended since 1988 as Potomac Horse Fever moved into our region. This disease is highly fatal in the unprotected horse. Believed to be transmitted by insects, it's best to vaccinate in the spring. In endemic areas, one should vaccinate in spring and fall. Initially, horses should receive two doses at a 3 to 4 week interval then a booster annually.
- D. **Rabies** – **Annually**: This is a neurological disease. Horses suffer from the dummy form of rabies. First symptoms of rabies is colic then progresses neurological symptoms due to this incidence of human exposure is high. Until recently, this vaccination was required for dogs and recommended for cats. However, with a surge of rabies making it's way across the country and recent reports indicating more rabies in our area, we are recommending immunizations for all horses, dogs and cats.
- E. **West Nile** – **Bi-annually**: Viral Etiology which causes neurological disease and is becoming more prevalent in our area. This disease has similar clinical symptoms as "Sleeping Sickness". We strongly recommend vaccinating your horse for this disease. Vaccinate initially 2 doses 3 weeks apart then bi-annually (April 1st and August).
- F. **Equine Viral Arteritis** – **Annually**: Viral Etiology – This virus attacks the microvasculature of the body and is highly contagious. It can cause abortion or epidemics. Broodmares should be vaccinated 3 – 4 weeks before breeding. All other horses should be vaccinated annually.
- G. **Distemper (Strangles)** – **Bi-annually**: Bacterial Etiology – This is a respiratory disease and typically causes abscessed lymph nodes especially around the head. Strangles is a very highly contagious disease. Initial vaccine is 3 doses 2 weeks apart. Then 1 to 2 times per year.
- H. **Intranasal Influenza Vaccine (Flu-avert)** – **Bi-annually**: This gives the animal local as well as systemic immunity. Increased efficacy over intramuscular vaccine. Vaccinate bi-annually. It is very beneficial to horses that are in high traffic areas, such as race tracks, boarding stables and breeding farms.
- I. **Rhinopneumonitis (Pneumabort-K) Vaccine**: Herpes virus is the most common cause of abortion in Iowa. Vaccinate in the 5th, 7th and 9th month of pregnancy. In highly endemic area, vaccinate in the 3rd month also.
- J. **Eastern, Western Venezuelan Equine Encephalitis – Commonly known as "Sleeping Sickness"** – **Annually**: This is a neurological disease. Vaccinate 1 or 2 times per year depending on incidence of the disease. If vaccinating once per year, vaccinate in the spring. It is a mosquitoes transmitted disease. Protection from the vaccine last 6 -8 months.