



# EQUINE INFECTIOUS ANEMIA

## FACT SHEET

### WHAT IS EQUINE INFECTIOUS ANEMIA?

Equine infectious anemia (EIA) is an incurable, infectious disease caused by a virus that affects members of the Equidae family, such as horses, ponies, zebras, mules, and donkeys. EIA is found widely throughout the world. There is no evidence that EIA is a threat to human health.

### SIGNS & SYMPTOMS

EIA signs and symptoms vary depending on the equine's disease resistance, the virus' ability to cause disease, and stress factors. EIA can appear as acute, chronic or inapparent. Most common signs include, but are not limited to:

- Fever
- Depression
- Low platelet count
- Anemia
- Red or purple spots on the mucous membranes
- Edema
- Muscle weakness
- Muscle atrophy

### TRANSMISSION

EIA is spread through blood-to-blood contact. It can be transmitted from an infected horse to a healthy horse by blood-feeding insects such as horseflies, deerflies, or stable flies. People have played a large role in EIA transmission over the years by using contaminated medical equipment, such as needles, syringes, IV sets and medications. When equipment is contaminated or "dirty" with blood from an infected horse it can spread the disease to healthy, unexposed horses when used again.

### DIAGNOSIS

EIA is detected through laboratory testing of equine blood samples collected by veterinarians. Upon testing, the veterinarian will issue a VS 10-11 form, commonly known as "Coggins papers", to the equine owner as official proof of testing. Equine owners should keep the document on hand when traveling with the horse for proof of testing.

If an equine tests positive, all equine animals on the shared premises, or otherwise exposed to the EIA infected animal, will be placed under quarantine by the TAHC, and all equine must be tested. Quarantines are released at the time TAHC requirements are met.

Horses confirmed positive can be quarantined for the rest of their life but are usually euthanized. Unless euthanized, all confirmed positive equine must be identified with a "74-A" freeze or firebrand on the upper left shoulder or neck within

10 days. EIA infected animals may never leave their premises, unless moved to an approved diagnostic or research facility with TAHC approval.

### REPORTING EIA

The Texas Animal Health Commission (TAHC) should be notified of all suspected and confirmed cases of EIA within 24 hours of diagnosis. Reports can be made to a TAHC region office or to the TAHC headquarters at 1-800-550-8242.

### PREVENTION

There is no vaccine available for Equine Infectious Anemia. Equine can be protected from EIA by implementing insect controls, keeping stables and facilities clean, using one needle per horse, separating infected equine from the healthy, obtaining yearly negative EIA "Coggins" tests, and never using blood-contaminated medical equipment on multiple equine.

### TESTING REQUIREMENTS

Equine must meet Texas Animal Health Commission (TAHC) EIA testing requirements when changing ownership, participating in an assembly, or stabled within the state of Texas.

- **Change of Ownership:** All equine eight months of age or older must have a negative EIA test within the previous 12 months, unless an exception applies.
- **Equine Assembly or Stabling:** All Texas equine are required to have an EIA test within the previous 12 months when participating in any assembly of equine (rodeo, trail ride, parade, roping, etc.), enter a pari-mutuel track, or used for riding on publicly accessible equestrian trails or lands; or are housed at a boarding, training, or breeding facility.

For a summary of equine testing requirements, or to determine if an equine animal qualifies for an exception, visit [www.tahc.texas.gov/reg/EntryRequirements\\_Equine.pdf](http://www.tahc.texas.gov/reg/EntryRequirements_Equine.pdf). Contact your private veterinarian to request EIA testing.

### EQUINE EVENTS

The person or group running the equine event (rodeo, trail ride, parade, roping, etc.) or stable is responsible for ensuring that all equine animals are accompanied by a valid VS 10-11 EIA "Coggins" test document. If an equine is presented without a test document or presented with invalid documents, the horse should not be admitted or offloaded on the premises. Event organizers are encouraged to contact their TAHC region office for additional information and resources, [www.tahc.texas.gov/agency/contact.html](http://www.tahc.texas.gov/agency/contact.html).