



EQUINE INFECTIOUS ANEMIA and COGGINS

What is it?

Equine infectious anemia (EIA), also known as swamp fever, is a horse disease caused by a retrovirus and transmitted by bloodsucking insects. EIA can be transmitted through blood, saliva, milk, and body secretions. Transmission is primarily through biting flies, such as the horse-fly and deer-fly. The virus survives up to 4 hours in the carrier. Contaminated surgical equipment and recycled needles and syringes, and bits can transmit the disease. Mares can transmit the disease to their foals via the placenta. The risk of transmitting the disease is greatest when an infected horse is ill, as the blood levels of the virus are then highest.

What are the symptoms?

Symptoms include a raised temperature to 105 to 108 degrees F, instead of the normal temperature of 100 degrees F. The horse will also appear depressed, become weak, and lose appetite and weight. Fluid (edema) may collect under the skin, in the legs, chest, and abdomen. Membranes lining the natural body opening may be congested and colored yellow. There is also a notable drop in the number of red blood cells (anemia). The horse normally dies in only a few days.

How do we detect it?

The Coggins test (agar immunodiffusion) is a sensitive diagnostic test for equine infectious anemia developed by Dr. Leroy Coggins in the 1970s. This test is very accurate and indicates whether the horse has been infected with the EIA virus. A horse that reacts positively to the test is classified as a carrier of the EIA. A horse with acute EIA may test negative for 16 – 42 days because its immune system has not – produced detectable antibodies. Otherwise, all three forms of EIA will test positive on the test for EIA. Figure 1 below illustrates a sample coggins test.

EQUINE INFECTIOUS ANEMIA TEST RECORD

Please print and address clearly for correct analysis only. I hereby certify that the blood specimen submitted with this form was taken by me from the animal described hereon and that it is fresh.

Name: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Color Markings and Whorls Must Be Shown?

White Markings and Whorls Must Be Shown?

TEST RESULTS

LEFT SIDE	RIGHT SIDE

Figure 1: Sample Coggins

How do you treat it?

There is no immunization or treatment for EIA in the United States. Insect control and the use of sterile or disposable needles is important in order to prevent the spread of EIA.

How does this affect me?

As a member of the United States Pony Club, a negative Coggins test is required for the participation in all horse shows and events. Many states require a negative Coggins test for interstate travel. Most countries require a negative test result before allowing an imported horse into the country.

It is recommended to verify that all the horses at a breeding farm and/or boarding facility have a negative Coggins test before using their services. A Coggins test should be done on an annual basis. Tests every 6 months are recommended if there is increased traveling. Please ensure the IBHPC secretary has a copy of your most current coggins for all mounts being used for Pony Club. It is also recommended you keep a copy with you for all horse events.