

Vaccinating your horse for Strangles (*Streptococcus equi*)

Vaccination of healthy horses with either the Strangles Intramuscular (IM); Strepvax II, or the Strangles Intranasal (IN); Pinnacle I.N. has been proven to be very safe with no more chance of reactions than using any other bacterim vaccine. Thousands of doses are given every year without any problems.

What type of effects are common when giving vaccines?

Fever 12 to 48 hours after the vaccine was given. The fever is usually mild and often goes unnoticed. During this time the horse may also be “off” a little, not as active or not performing up to normal. So do not give just before equestrian events or prior to times when there may be known stressors.

What type of effects are rare and of small concern?

Injection site swelling will occur in a very small percent of horses given the IM vaccine. This usually occurs in 48 to 72 hours after the vaccine was given and lasts 3-5 days (rarely up to 7 days). Sore muscles in a few animals can last for a week, this is not common but to be safe give your horse 10 days before any major events. Do not give when administering other vaccines, do them a few weeks apart.

What about severe reactions?

Severe reactions can occur in a horse that has a high titer to Strangles, meaning the horse would have been recently infected and has built an immunity against the disease. We can minimize problems by following some simple good vaccination protocols:

- Do not give to horses that have recently had Strangles or currently have or recovering from Strangles.
- Do not give to horses that have a fever – Temperature of 102 or greater.
- Palpate (feel) for swollen lymph nodes under the jaw of the horse, do not give if swelling is found.
- Do not inject the I.N. vaccine it is to be given intranasally – it will cause abscesses if injected into a muscle. Do not get it near wounds and follow directions carefully.

Vaccinations are very safe when given properly with only a very low percent of horse having any type of reactions, other than the normal fever and being off for a few days. Vaccinations can help to protect your horses and will also help to keep other horses you travel with or come into contact with at equestrian events healthy, from those unseen carriers.

Keeping horses healthy is everyone’s responsibilities. Vaccinating your horse is not just for you, it is for all equestrian enthusiasts. Let’s work to help minimize the spread of any disease that may devastate another person, if for nothing else but not being able to participate in their important events.

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