

NORTHERN SUBURBS PONY CLUB

OCTOBER Newsletter '07

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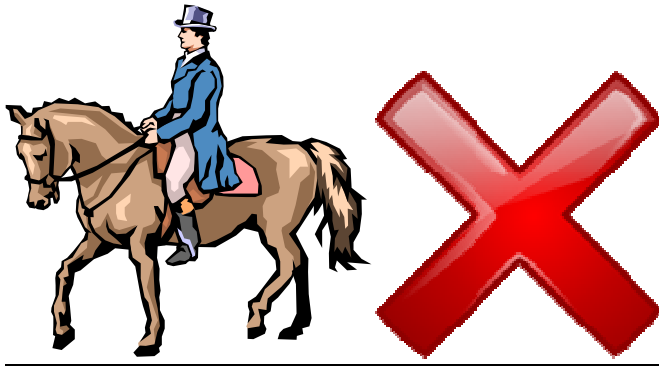
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NEWSLETTER

Tracey Llewelyn
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Dr Nathan Anthony BVSc (Hons)
Equine Veterinarian
6 September 2007

EQUINE INFLUENZA – INFORMATION FOR HORSE OWNERS

Equine Influenza (EI) virus is rapidly spread by the respiratory route especially when there is close direct contact between horses. Infected horses excrete the virus in their expired air for up to 15 days after initial infection and coughing contributes to the spread. There is no long term carrier state. Equine influenza virus survives in the environment for up to 36 hours but is easily killed by cleaning and disinfection. Infection can be spread by contaminated horse transport floats, equipment, bedding and personnel. The windborne virus may spread for up to 8km.

CLINICAL SIGNS OF EQUINE INFLUENZA (See attached video)

After having experience with 252 cases of EI at Morgan Park Warwick, my clinical impression of the disease is as follows:

• TEMPERATURE

Infected horses develop elevated rectal temperature greater than 38.4 degrees Celsius. Most are around 39.5 and the highest

recorded was 40.8. It is important that temperature is monitored twice daily as horses will cycle between normal (approx 37.5)

and elevated over the course of the day. Infected horses will maintain elevated temperatures for 1-5 days.

• COUGH

Most horses with EI will cough. The cough is a characteristic dry, harsh and hacking cough. Some horses will only cough 2 or 3

times a day. Other horses will cough frequently. Coughing is generally worse when eating hay or hard feed. **Refer to the**

attached video.

• NASAL DISCHARGE

Nearly all horses with EI develop a watery nasal discharge. Some horses will develop thick snotty noses. **Refer to the attached**

video.

• Demeanour/behaviour

Some horses with EI will be obviously depressed and lethargic. They may not eat hard feed or have reduced intake. Some will seem muscle sore.

If you detect these symptoms consistent with Influenza you should contact your Veterinarian or the DPI (13 25 23).

HOW CONTAGIOUS IS EI?

This disease is EXPLOSIVELY contagious. Morgan Park yielded 100% of 252 at risk horses.

HOW LONG DOES THE VIRUS LIVE FOR?

Examples of virus survival times are:

• Hard, non-porous surfaces like plastic: 24-48 hours

• Cloth and paper: 8-12 hours

• Canal water: up to 18 days

Thorough cleaning with soap or detergent and water and disinfectant easily kills the virus.

TREATMENT FOR INFLUENZA

Some horses will require no treatment. Horses with persistently high temperatures may require anti-inflammatory drugs to lower temperatures. Some horses will require antibiotic treatment for secondary bacterial infections. An attempt should be made to keep sick horses in the shade and out of bad weather. Do not exercise infected horses as this will worsen their respiratory status.

COMPLICATIONS FROM INFLUENZA

Some horses may develop pneumonia. Those at greatest risk are the young foals and the very old. Extra care and attention is necessary for at risk horses.

HAVE THERE BEEN ANY DEATHS ASSOCIATED WITH EI IN QLD?

To my knowledge there have been no fatal complications. All 252 horses in Morgan Park currently have survived.

CAN PEOPLE CATCH EI?

No. The transmission of EI to humans under natural conditions has not occurred in any previous outbreaks of EI worldwide.

HOW IS INFLUENZA CONFIRMED?

Blood tests and nasal swabs are necessary for definitive diagnosis. The Government covers the costs of these. However, consistent clinical signs and close proximity to a confirmed property is often enough.

WHAT IS THE INCUBATION PERIOD FOR EI?

My experience at Morgan Park indicated 2-6 days; that is that horses exposed to virus will show clinical signs within this time frame.

HOW LONG IS AN INFECTED HORSE CONTAGIOUS?

It is reported as 15 days.

IS THERE A CARRIER STATUS?

That is to say will my horse recover and still have the potential to infect other horses? The answer is no.

WILL MY HORSE BECOME INFECTED AGAIN?

Infection with this strain of EI will result in immunity, although not for life. Therefore, if challenged again by the same virus in the near future your horse will not redevelop the disease.

CAN I VACCINATE MY HORSE TO PREVENT THE DISEASE?

No vaccination is available in Australia for commercial use at this time. If the disease becomes extensive, national wide and cannot be controlled, biannual vaccination will be instituted.

WHAT IS THE CURRENT SITUATION IN BROOKFIELD?

There are many confirmed properties in Brookfield; currently greater than 20 and growing daily. It is likely that the many of the Brookfield horses will become infected. The DPI will reconsider quarantining individual properties and will likely assume that the Brookfield and Kenmore Hills equine population is infected.

HOW IS IT SPREADING THROUGH BROOKFIELD?

It is my opinion that the majority of spread is associated with either close-contact horses or via airborne transmission. It seems that at this stage that airborne carry for 500-800 metres is likely. Experimentally, airborne virus may spread up to 8 kms. However some cases would have resulted from infected equipment and personnel.

WHAT ABOUT PULLENVALE AND BEYOND?

It is hoped that the the geographical and urban barriers may prevent spread from Brookfield and Kenmore Hills, however there is risk of person to horse spread. In my opinion if significant directional winds develop, Pullenvale will be at considerable risk and subsequently neighbouring areas.

WHAT IS THE SITUATION IN ROSEWOOD AND MINDEN?

There are multiple infected properties in this area and the numbers are increasing daily.

WHAT CAN I AS A LOCAL HORSE OWNER DO?

1. Monitor your horses daily for clinical signs and report suspect cases to your Veterinarian;
2. Do not go onto other horse properties and minimise access of the horse owning public on your property;
3. If and where possible, locate your horses centrally on your property;
4. Obey the State wide movement restrictions;
5. If you have contact with suspect properties, follow strict decontamination guidelines.

SHOULD MY FARRIER COME ONTO MY PROPERTY AT THIS TIME?

No. Cancel any existing appointments.

SHOULD MY HORSE DENTIST COME ONTO MY PROPERTY AT THIS TIME?

No. Cancel any existing appointments.

SHOULD MY HORSE CHIROPRACTOR/PHYSIOTHERAPIST COME ONTO MY PROPERTY AT THIS TIME?

No. Cancel any existing appointments.

SHOULD MY RIDING INSTRUCTOR COME ONTO MY PROPERTY AT THIS TIME?

No. Cancel any existing appointments.

SHOULD MY VETERINARIAN COME ONTO MY PROPERTY AT THIS TIME?

Cancel any existing appointments for routine work eg. dentistry, vaccinations. Your Veterinarian can attend sick or injured horses. We will endeavour to treat all properties as potentially infected and as such we will wear protective clothing and decontaminate.

WHY IMPOSE A STANDSTILL OR MOVEMENT RESTRICTION?

A standstill will minimise the spread of disease and the hope is that the virus will burn out. At this stage the standstill has been revoked, HOWEVER it has been replaced by a restricted area across the whole of Queensland. It is still illegal to move your horse without a permit and police are enforcing this law. You will be aware that the police are located on Brookfield Rd, Gap Creek Rd and Rafting Ground Rd 24 hours a day.

AM I ALLOWED TO RIDE MY HORSE ON THE ROAD OR IN THE FORESTS?

No. The standstill applies for ridden horses also.

CAN I GET PERMISSION TO MOVE MY HORSE?

Permission can be sought through the DPI (Ph 13 25 23) on welfare grounds, eg. Transporting to a Veterinary Hospital.

WHY ATTEMPT TO ERADICATE EI?

Vaccination is not completely effective, the disease is highly contagious and on welfare grounds.

WHAT DOES THE VIRUS DO TO MY HORSE?

The virus damages the respiratory tract, that is the lung tissue and windpipe. Secondary bacterial infection can result.

WHAT IS THE RECOVERY PERIOD?

It is suggested that it takes 30 days for repair of this tissue. For equine athletes, a subsequent 30 days is also advised prior to the recommencement of work.

HOW DO I DECONTAMINATE MYSELF?

EI is a fragile virus and is easily killed. Simply soap and water or detergents will kill the virus. If in contact with a suspicious horse, it is recommended that you change clothes and boots, shower with soap, and shampoo hair. Avoid contact with horses for 48 hours.

HOW DO I DECONTAMINATE MY EQUIPMENT AND VEHICLES?

Thorough cleaning with soap or detergent and water and disinfectant can easily kill the virus. The virus is killed by exposure to sunlight for 30 minutes.

FOR HOW LONG IS PROPERTY QUARANTINED?

Morgan Park will be quarantined for a period of 30 days after detection of the last clinical case. A similar although perhaps longer timeframe will be in place for infected properties in our community.

WHAT HAPPENS IF THE DISEASE IS NOT SUCCESSFULLY ERADICATED?

If infection becomes widespread, nationwide and is considered uncontrollable Australia will adopt a system of twice-yearly vaccination and we will live with periodic outbreaks.

Finally, I urge everybody to remain vigilant, obey the laws and recommendations, but remember that windborne spread is beyond our control. Monitor your horses closely for signs of the disease and report suspect cases immediately.

REPORT FROM VIC

The year is fast drawing to a close and we all hope that we can start the New Year back at Pony Club. Still, I'm sure all horses are enjoying their long service leave.

Our club is hosting an Equestrian and General Knowledge Trivia Night on the 27th or 28th of November. This will be held at a local State School Hall with a flyer going out this week.

We will need some help with:

1. Setting up the tables before hand, (from 6.00)
2. Preparing a light refreshment for intermission
3. and clean-up afterwards. (about 9.30)

This event will be a little different from the average Trivia Night as most of the questions will be presented visually on a big screen along with the host commentary.

If anyone can lend a hand on the night, please email me indicating your area of help (1, 2 or 3). I will send out some updates with more details as they develop.

Vic

PROFESSIONAL HORSE CLIPPING

PRICES FROM \$65.00 PER HORSE – NORTHSIDE ONLY – PHONE KARLA 0414560472.

WORMING TUBES – FUND RAISER :-

Please support our Club and purchase your next wormers from us. Your horses must be due for worming !!!! Worming tubes are for sale from Che or Denise on 0431 450993. The wormers are \$20 – for two doses (\$10 per dose) – and each does covers a horse up to 600kg. This is cheaper than you can purchase anywhere and it gets better. \$5 per wormer comes back to Northern Suburbs Pony Club. So stock up before they sell out, they will keep in the fridge as well.

THE WARICK LOCKDOWN – story from Linda Perkins.

On Friday 24th August Renee Fedrick and I drove my 2 horses, Cait and Xtra to the Warwick FEI World Cup competition at Morgan Park to be held on 25th and 26th August. During the day on Saturday it was announced that there were a couple of horses running a temperature and were likely to be suffering from travel sickness as they had travelled from NSW though as there had been some mention of Equine Influenza in the news that the horses were to be tested for EI and the competition would continue to go ahead. At this time, even though they had been asked to stay several people decided to take their horses home (which ultimately started other outbreaks around Qld). Both Cait and Xtra did well on both their dressage tests and cross country rounds on Saturday. By the end of Saturday we were told that we were in 'Lockdown Quarantine' pending the results of the tests on those couple of horses but it was still unlikely to be EI so the competition was still to go ahead. Xtra was coming in 2nd place after good dressage and fantastic cross country. On Sunday morning while Renee and I were readying the horses for their showjumping round it was announced that the competition had been cancelled and that there was to be a meeting at 10 am. The competition was cancelled as horses put under physical stress while incubating suffer more severely. At the meeting we were told that the initial tests were positive to EI and that we were to remain on site under lockdown and quarantine conditions until further notice. Vet rounds were to commence that afternoon so horses needed to be in their stable with their temperature having been taken so the Vet could be advised.

As you can imagine there was a fair bit of organizing to be done. The Warwick committee swung into action but also every individual needed to make personal arrangements for themselves and for their horses. Some people organized others to care for their horse/s and left the site while the majority of people bunkered down to stay for an unknown amount of time. The Fedrick family came to pick up Renee as she needed to attend Uni the next morning and I was lucky enough that they were able to pick up some things from home to bring to me including additional grain feed, thermometer and horse medications from home.

The first few days were certainly the hardest. Horses were becoming sick almost immediately with Cait and Xtra both starting to show a temperature by the end of Monday. We were unsure what to expect. Home life needed to be organized so I could stay away at Warwick and some sort of living arrangements needed to be made at Morgan Park so I could stay. Almost immediately I teamed up with some of my old friends from when I use to event years ago who proved to be an excellent team. That Monday was Ken and My 7th wedding anniversary so I was keen to get home as well that there was also a lot of customers wanting their Vet supply orders. I didn't make it home on Monday as it was quite late by the time the Vet had got to the horses and there was still the Warwick committee holding a meeting to endeavour to keep everybody up to date with what was happening. Really that day passed in a bit of a haze of trying to figure out what needed to be organized and how to go about getting it done. I made it home on Tuesday which was really just as well because I really needed to clear my head. When I arrived back it had become 'Morgan Town' with washing machines on site as well as clothes lines. Also the Vet rounds had become regular with a regular start time of 7.30 am and 4.00 pm daily with 3 Vets each starting at a specific stable and continuing down the line in the same order every time. This made life much more predictable. Also by now it had been arranged that 3 meals a day would be available in the canteen at specific times. With waiting for the Vet we didn't always make meal times though I now had access to a fridge, a microwave, kettle and toaster I could manage without making meal times when necessary. Also within a few days it was decided that horse feed would also be provided which was a huge relief as horse feed needed to undergo DPI protocol before being allowed onto the site so it was pretty much impossible to do this on an individual basis. Furney's stockfeed were already in attendance for the event and stayed on for the entire quarantine period. Just amazing. Warren Furney from Furney's stockfeeds would have to be best feed guy in Australia. He was incredibly helpful and I understand he is planning to be in Morgan Town until this coming Sunday (which will be about a 45 day stay for him) so he can be there to finalize as much as possible particularly as the NSW people have been getting told 'it's okay to go' and then told 'no you can't go' several times now. Hopefully they're on their way by now but who knows?

We got into more or less a routine. My friends that I teamed up with are Linda McDonald and Liz Bagley. Between us we had 5 horses and we mostly had 2 out of the 3 of us there. Looking after all 5 horses on your own was possible but you had to keep going and going to get everything done on your own. Each of us were able to get 'home' for a day or maybe a few days each week. Going 'home' really meant going to work at your real job so we could each keeps some type of income happening. I am very lucky that Ken was able to send many of the Vet supply orders over that time. He had to stay up working until midnight several nights a week to do it and I'm very appreciative that he was able to.

Each day was basically - get up early to feed horses, muck stables, take temperatures and wait for the Vet. This would normally take 2-3 hours. After the Vet was breakfast then hand graze horses (which became find a yard for horses once portable panel fencing was erected). Horses were normally hand grazed for 20 minutes or longer each twice daily.

Once yards became available (horses had to be rotated through to each take turns) then yards had to be mucked too. To start with horses were to have approximately 45 minutes each daily in a yard and they still needed hand grazing as grass is always the best feed especially to help reduce the chances of colic. After morning hand grazing/finding a yard/bring in from yard/mucking yard was lunch. Many days after lunch was 'Civic Duty' as we called it. Civic Duty might be helping to assist put up more yards, unload hay from a truck, bring sawdust to the stables from the shavings pile, bring hay to the containers which had been put at various locations through out the stables. Then of course there were personal chores that needed attending to such as laundry, putting up tarps or water proofing sleeping areas. I slept in my horsefloat which leaked a little bit when it rained but I was able to borrow a SES tarp to cover it. EFA introductory level instructor training was organized and I was asked to teach a session. Once the majority of the setting up was done aerobics classes were available during the early afternoon twice a week. The department of Sport and Recreation provided soccer balls, a table tennis table, volleyball net, board games etc. to help pass the time. 2 TV's were installed from the ceiling in the canteen which helped us to feel part of the rest of the world, at least a little bit.

In the afternoon after the horses had each had their walk and hand grazing they needed to be fed and rugged with temperatures ready for the afternoon Vet round. Every 5 or 6 days we would get a new Vet which didn't help with continuity though it was better once we started to get the same Vets back for a 2nd 'tour'. After the afternoon Vet round which for us was anywhere from 5 pm to 6.30 pm depending on how much time the horses seen before us needed we started what we called 'Wine Time'. We sat with either a cold drink or a glass of wine and ate cheese, crackers and nibbles before going up before serving dinner ended at 7 pm and most nights there was an update meeting to keep everybody up to date with what ever new information there was. As these started to become a bit of 'don't do this' and 'don't do that' type meeting they started a 'warm and fuzzy' box where people could write a short 'warm and fuzzy' thankyou to somebody for having done something nice for them. This could be things such as hanging out their laundry or cleaning somebody's else's horse's stall. After this it was generally shower and go to bed ready for the next day.

Some of the great things were to have washing machines, clothes lines, generally great weather, gas hot water for showers, plenty of horse people for company and to chat with, plenty of horse feed available, having meals available, warm and fuzzy box, the Red Cross almost daily visits handing out bottled water, a great committee working for our cause and friendships new and renewed.

Some of the not so great things were very limited food choices (many nights it was pork chops, mashed potatoes and carrots as the total meal so if you didn't like pork, 'packet' mashed potato or carrots you didn't get much to eat), people hanging hairy horse gear next to your underwear on the clothes line, showers that went randomly from hot to cold to hot, wet and dirty change areas for the showers (even though they were cleaned daily), sharing a toilet block (whew! who could make that smell?), horses being sick, horses feeling better that are cooped up in stables and shying, dancing, prancing and jumping on

the end of their lead ropes, continual discussions of 'when will we get out of here' plus plenty of other rumours hashed and re-hashed, the media accusing us of having a holiday camp, (if we are going to be there there's no point whinging and we might as well make the most of it by cracking a few jokes), oh! and getting a speeding ticket on my way home to Brisbane one night.

At one stage I put a floating crocodile head in the creek (more like a drain really) and it was very funny to watch people walk past and notice the crocodile. One night we played picture dictionary and had a fun and noisy time. As our camp area was by the creek/drain we decided that we lived on the 'Canal Estate' and others who were camped further along the end claimed that they lived at 'Morgan Heights'. I heard somebody explaining where their campsite was and they said "you come in the front gate and along the freeway and take the first exit after the Vet's Shed". Once you've been there a week or two you know exactly where they mean. The last couple of weeks they had 'Friday Night Games' which needed a team of 4 and consisted of relay sack race, relay apple bobbing (which we won, yaaaay!!), relay 3 legged race and a sprint relay. Apparently the week before they had wheelbarrow races which was a lot of fun even though it caused some minor injuries. Some school teachers were 'stuck' there and also plenty of school age children so the local TAFE was able to send a portable building/donger and school was run from 10 am - 1 pm daily. This kept some of the teachers on the payroll as well as the kids being able to continue their school work. Wireless internet was organized for the Canteen so people with laptops could receive and send emails. Computers and the internet were also available for the school kids so they could receive work from their regular teachers as well as do research on the internet.

On 2nd September we told that every horse on the site was confirmed for EI and that following the DPI guidelines we would be allowed to go home 30 days from then. The next day though the DPI said that they couldn't confirm when we would be allowed to go and that decisions was still to be made. We weren't given 100% confirmation that we would be allowed to start taking horses home on the 2nd October until late in the day on the 1st of October. Even though it had been released to the media (and put on the news earlier) we still hadn't actually been given a confirmed go ahead until quite late Monday. Over 60 horses and their trucks and floats underwent the exiting protocol on Tuesday the 2nd. I was able to exit on Wednesday arriving home with the horses about 1 pm. The horses had been away for 40 days. My property at home now has DPI entering and exiting protocols to be followed for all persons entering and exiting for the next 14 days. I have put signs on the gate and discouraged any visitors. Some people have received death threats to their horses (presumably from neighbours) if they were to take their horses home. We have been told by the Vets that we have the safest horses in Queensland because they have all been tested and now have immunity for at least several months. At the same time now having witnessed just how contagious EI is I'm more than happy to follow any and every protocol the DPI encourage.

It was certainly an amazing experience. Priorities get changed very quickly when the circumstances become a disaster (and we were officially a National Disaster). The Equine Influenza outbreak is a long way from finished yet. Let's do everything we can

do personally as well as encourage others to continue to do whatever is necessary to reduce the spread of this disease to an absolute minimum. – *Linda Perkins – 5/10/07*

PLEASE NOTE :-

NO HORSES ARE TO GO INTO THE FENCED ARENA TO GRAZE. PLEASE KEEP THE GATE SHUT WHEN ENTERING AND LEAVING – THIS IS TO BE KEPT AVAILABLE FOR RIDING PURPOSES ONLY !!!!!

AJISTEES :- Please note, as in previous years, the horses have given the grounds of Northern Suburbs a spell over December and January. If the lockdown continues this year will be different with no movement of horses. Just a reminder that you will have to be a Financial Member of Northern Suburbs Pony Club by the 1st of January. As Secretary, I am responsible for co-ordination of this and I will be away most of December and therefore, would appreciate your early assistance with this matter. I will be posting out membership forms in the coming weeks – many thanks - Tracey.

Many thanks also to **STAR REALTY** who have sent through their sponsorship for this year - Thanks for Jason also, for his wonderful work on the web – site – don't forget to take a look – www.freewebs.com/northernsuburbs.

Committee Meetings have been going ahead off Pony Club Grounds – next meeting November 13, 7.00pm – Venue to be arranged – any suggestions???? Coffee Club a little noisy.

If you see something around the Club, that needs doing, don't wait for us to organize a working bee, just jump in and do it – please remember – it is preferred that only ajistees visit the Pony Club Grounds at this time.

CHRISTMAS PARTY – and Northern Suburbs Special General Meeting to be held at the Albany Creek Leisure Centre on the 9th of December at 11am. Bar-be-que lunch will be provided for all financial members. Flyer on this coming soon -