

Strangles in Horses

K. Small and R. Morton, Biosecurity and Product Integrity, Darwin

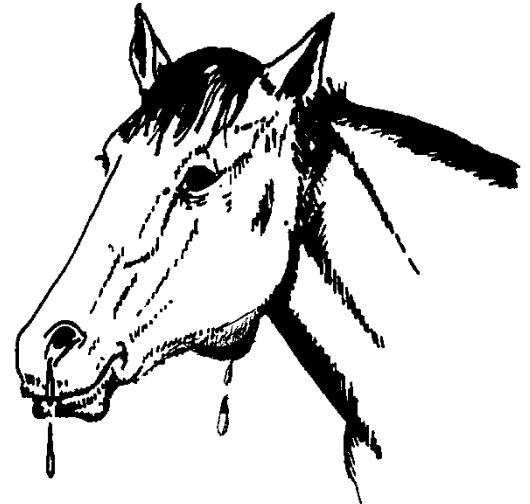
Strangles is a highly infectious disease of horses caused by the bacterium *Streptococcus equi*.

STRANGLES SYMPTOMS

The animal develops a high temperature, is off its feed and there is a mucous discharge from the nose which gradually thickens to become pus. The horse may cough and have difficulty swallowing. The lymph glands between the branches of the lower jaw become inflamed and swollen and an abscess is formed. The swelling continues to increase and after several days it may burst and discharge a creamy yellow pus.

SUSCEPTIBLE ANIMALS

Young animals are particularly susceptible, but any animal which has not previously suffered from the disease will be susceptible. Grouping horses together in stables greatly increases spread of the disease. Inhalation or ingestion of infectious droplets breathed or coughed out by infected animals would appear to be the main source of infection.



TREATMENT

For treatment consult a veterinary surgeon.

PREVENTION

All horses should be included in a regular program of vaccination. When horses and foals are vaccinated against strangles for the first time, a course of three doses, each of 1 mL of strangles vaccine, should be given with an interval of not less than two weeks between each dose. All horses should then receive annual booster doses of 1 mL.

CONTROL

In the event of an outbreak of strangles, horses should be segregated into three groups.

1. All sick animals should be isolated and treated, but not vaccinated.
2. Horses with no known contact with the disease should be vaccinated immediately.
3. Horses known to have been in contact should be observed for 7 to 10 days and vaccinated only if they have a normal temperature and show no clinical signs of the disease.

Please visit us at our website:

www.nt.gov.au/d

© Northern Territory Government

ISSN 0157-8243

Serial No. 560 Agdex No. 461/653

Disclaimer: While all care has been taken to ensure that information contained in this document is true and correct at the time of publication, the Northern Territory of Australia gives no warranty or assurance, and makes no representation as to the accuracy of any information or advice contained in this publication, or that it is suitable for your intended use. No serious, business or investment decisions should be made in reliance on this information without obtaining independent and/or professional advice in relation to your particular situation.