



Glossary of Terms

Acute- referring to a disease: An abrupt onset of disease; a disease with a short duration.

AHS: African Horse Sickness.

Anthrax- An acute bacterial disease contracted when a horse ingests *Bacillus anthracis* spores or is bitten by infected insects. Anthrax can be spread to humans and is often fatal.

Antigenic Drift: The small genetic changes that occur in a virus as it travels from host to host over time. Antigenic drift is the reason new vaccination must be created for the virus over time.

Ataxia: Loss or failure of muscular coordination; uncoordinated.

Atrophy: To waste away; usually used to describe decreased muscle size.

Blastomycosis- A fungal infection cause by the *Blastomyces dermatitidis*. Blastomycosis presents with a respiratory infection and skin lesions and can be fatal. It is most commonly found in the Mississippi River Valley region.

Botulism, forage poisoning: Disease caused by the nerve-poisoning toxin of the bacteria *Clostridium botulinum* which live in certain soils, wounds and in decaying organic matter.

Brucellosis- A bacterial infection cause by *Brucella abortus* that most often manifests in infectious bursitis (fistulous withers, poll evil) but can also cause abortion in mares.

Buffy Coat Sample: The portion of anticoagulated blood in a centrifuged sample. Contains white blood cells and platelets.

CNS.: Central Nervous System.

CBC: Complete Blood Count.

Chronic- referring to disease: A disease or condition of long duration.

Coggins test: A blood test to detect infection with the virus that causes Equine Infectious Anemia (EIA) also known as swamp fever.

Confirmed (case): Disease has been confirmed positive by diagnostic testing.

Equine Disease Communication Center:

Dermatophilosis- a skin infection caused by a microorganism called an actinomycete. Dermatophilosis manifests itself in skin lesions and hair loss and is commonly referred to as “rain rot”.

DNA: Deoxyribonucleic Acid which makes up the genetic code for all living organisms including bacteria and viruses.

Eastern Equine Encephalomyelitis (EEE): A viral infection of the horse's brain and spinal cord which can infect horses, humans and selected birds and is transmitted by mosquitoes.

Edema: Fluid accumulation commonly occurring under the skin. Edema is the result of inflammation or poor circulation.

EHV-1: Equine Herpesvirus 1, which is a DNA virus that can cause respiratory infection, neonatal death, abortion, and a neurologic condition known as EHM.

EHV-4: Equine herpesvirus 4. A form of Equine Herpesvirus, a DNA virus that usually causes a nonfatal respiratory infection but can rarely cause neonatal death, abortion, and a neurologic condition known as EHM.

ELISA: Enzyme Linked Immunosorbent Assay. A form of testing to determine levels of medication, proteins, antibodies, hormones or antigen from a disease agent in blood or fluids. As an example this test is used to detect EIA.

Equine Infectious Anemia (EIA): A contagious disease characterized by an initial acute fever, anemia, weakness to the point of incoordination, and jaundice, as well as other signs. Ensuing attacks result in emaciation, and cardiac insufficiency. It is spread by biting flies, mosquitoes or by using needles for more than one horse. Surviving horses can appear normal and are carriers for life.

Equine influenza: A contagious viral disease of the upper respiratory tract similar to human flu.

Equine Piroplasmiasis: a disease caused by a vector-borne blood parasite that is transmitted most commonly via tick bites but is also transmitted by shared needles and/or improperly disinfected surgical instruments.

Equine Protozoal Myeloencephalitis: A disease that causes neurologic deficits in the horse. It is transmitted when the horse ingests protozoa while grazing or when consuming contaminated feed or drinking water.

Equine Pythiosis- A disease caused by a fungus like micro-organism known as a Pythium which causes cutaneous (affecting the skin), subcutaneous (affecting tissues beneath the skin), and lymphatic (affecting the lymph nodes) lesions.

Equine viral arteritis (EVA): A contagious viral disease spread by casual contact or by breeding with an infected horse.

Host: The organism invaded by a pathogen.

Incubation Period: The time between initial exposure to a disease and when first symptoms appear.

Index Case: The first horse or group of horses to show symptoms of a disease in an outbreak.

Index Point of Exposure: The initial site or location of exposure to the disease for the confirmed index case.

Index Premises: The location of the index case in an outbreak.

Influenza: A viral infection that causes a highly contagious upper-respiratory disease. There is a specific influenza virus which affects horses.

Isolation: Separation of an infected horse(s) from non-infected horses to prevent spread of disease. Isolation includes containment and management of horses so that there is no chance of spreading infection.

Latent Infection: A virus that remains in a host without causing disease. A dormant pathogen.

Leishmaniasis- A protozoal disease transmitted through the bite of infected sand flies.

Lyme disease: Infection with the spiral-shaped bacteria *Borrelia burgdorferi*, spread by the bite of an infected tick.

Mange: An infestation of parasitic mites which causes skin irritation and lesions.

Pathogen: A disease-causing microbe such as a bacterium, virus, or other microorganism.

Pigeon Fever- Also known as Ulcerative lymphangitis: A bacterial infection of the lymph nodes in the horse which most commonly causes abscesses in the pectoral region but can also manifest as swelling of the legs and cellulitis.

PCR: Polymerase chain reaction. A test often used to diagnose specific infectious agents by testing for DNA.

Potomac Horse Fever: A bacterial infection which can cause anorexia, fever, depression, laminitis, and colic-like symptoms. Horses contract PHF by ingesting slugs, snails, and mayflies carrying the bacteria.

Quarantine: Separation and restriction of movement to prevent spread of disease; otherwise known as enforced isolation.

Quarantine barn: Any facility used to keep infected horses away from the general equine population.

Rabies: A zoonotic disease (can infect multiple species) that causes neurologic disorder, paralysis, aggression and death.

RBC: Red Blood Cell Count.

Reactivation: A latent virus already in the horse that begins to cause disease; usually due to immunosuppression.

Recumbent: Lying down, reclining.

Ringworm- Also known as Tinea: A fungal infection of the skin that causes itching, rashes, and scaling.

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Salmonella- Also known as salmonellosis: A contagious bacterial infection that causes diarrhea, colic, lethargy, fever, and can cause localized infections or endotoxemia (toxins in the blood).

Septicemia: Blood poisoning due to bacteria and their toxins in the horse's bloodstream.

Strangles: Contagious upper respiratory tract infection that can cause fever, loss of appetite, watery-to-thick nasal discharge, cough and swelling, and eventual drainage of pus from the lymph nodes under the horse's lower jaw and throatlatch.

Suspect (case): Horse suspected of having a disease that has not yet been confirmed by diagnostic testing.

Vector/Carrier: An organism that carries and transmits a pathogen such as a tick or mosquito.

Venezuelan Equine Encephalomyelitis (VEE): A highly contagious disease affecting the central nervous system. Can cause illness or death in horses and humans. Is currently not present in the USA.

Vesicular Stomatitis (VS): An acute viral disease spread by biting insects and affecting horses, cattle, swine, sheep, goats and wild animals; causes vesicular lesions (Blisters) and ulcerative stomatitis (Sores and ulcers of the mouth, tongue, and mucous membranes).

Viremia: The presence of a virus in the blood.

WBC: White Blood Cell Count.

WEE: Western Equine Encephalomyelitis.

West Nile Virus (WNV): A mosquito-borne, viral infection affecting both horses and humans that causes neurologic disease.

Zoonotic: A disease that can be spread between animals and humans.