



# Equine Viral Arteritis

Elisabeth J. Giedt, D.V.M. , M.B.A.

Director of Engagement, Continuing Education and Extension  
Center for Veterinary Health Sciences  
Oklahoma State University

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## Description

Equine viral arteritis (EVA) is an acute, contagious, viral disease of both horses and donkeys.

## Where the Disease Occurs

The virus is present in horse and donkey populations in many countries throughout the world.

## Symptoms in Horses

Exposure to EVA virus may or may not result in clinical disease. When clinical signs occur they may range from fever, depression, respiratory symptoms, swelling of the legs (especially the hind legs), swelling of scrotum, prepuce and mammary glands, conjunctivitis and nasal discharge. Symptoms are similar to several other diseases such as influenza and rhinopneumonitis. The virus causes damage to the smaller blood vessels resulting in edema and hemorrhage in many tissues and organs. Some strains of the virus cause abortion and death in young foals.

## How the Disease Spreads

This virus can be spread by:

- respiratory secretions
- breeding with infected stallions using fresh, cooled or frozen semen
- contaminated equipment-tack, equipment
- urine and feces
- mare to foal across placenta

Outbreaks of EVA are usually linked to the movement of animals or the shipment of semen. Viral transmission can be widespread at racetracks or on breeding farms.

Carrier stallions may be reservoirs of the virus without expressing any outward symptoms. These stallions are primarily responsible for persistence of the virus in different horse populations throughout the world.

## Diagnosis

Blood samples and nasopharyngeal and conjunctival swabs and semen may be collected for virus isolation and the detection of antibodies.

There is no specific treatment for EVA and most affected horses recover completely.

## Control of the Disease in Animals

Most prevention and control programs are focused on preventing or curtailing dissemination of equine arteritis virus in breeding populations, minimizing the risk of virus-related abortion or death in young foals and establishment of the carrier state in stallions.

All Stallions should be tested for EVA. Positive stallions must be identified prior to breeding.

## Breeding to a Positive EVA Stallion

Follow the advice of your veterinarian to institute a vaccination program for the mares to allow breeding with infected stallions.

## Vaccination Programs

Follow the directions of your veterinarian in instituting a vaccination program for your farm.

## Can People Get the Disease?

The disease only affects horses and donkeys.

Elisabeth J. Giedt, D.V.M. , M.B.A.

Director of Engagement, Continuing Education and Extension  
Center for Veterinary Health Sciences  
002B Veterinary Medical Teaching Hospital  
Oklahoma State University  
Stillwater, OK 74078-2005  
[giedt@okstate.edu](mailto:giedt@okstate.edu)

405.744.8475

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Extension carries out programs in the broad categories of agriculture, natural resources and environment; family and consumer sciences; 4-H and other youth; and community resource development. Extension staff members live and work among the people they serve to help stimulate and educate Americans to plan ahead and cope with their problems.

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- It utilizes research from university, government, and other sources to help people make their own decisions.
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- It dispenses no funds to the public.
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- The Extension staff educates people through personal contacts, meetings, demonstrations, and the mass media.
- Extension has the built-in flexibility to adjust its programs and subject matter to meet new needs. Activities shift from year to year as citizen groups and Extension workers close to the problems advise changes.

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