



EHV-1 and Equine Herpes Myeloencephalopathy

State veterinary officials are asking horse owners in North Carolina to watch for symptoms of a highly contagious equine disease following diagnoses of multiple horses with Equine Herpes Myeloencephalopathy, the neurologic disease associated with Equine Herpes Virus.

Cases were confirmed on November 9, 2025, by the Texas Animal Health Commission and the Oklahoma Department of Agriculture, Food and Forestry. Currently, there are no confirmed cases of EHV-1/EHM in North Carolina.

All affected horses reported to date attended the 2025 WPRA World Finals and Elite Barrel Race event in Waco, Texas on November 5-9, 2025. Two confirmed cases in Oklahoma also attended the BFA World Championship at Lazy E Arena in Guthrie, OK, scheduled for November 17-22. Due to the confirmed positive cases, this event was cancelled, and remaining participants were sent home. TAHC and ODAFF are working closely with event coordinators, equine owners, and other states to respond to the outbreak, and prevent further spread of the virus. Our epidemiological investigation is ongoing.

[NCDA&CS Press Release](#)

These were large events attended by horses from many states. Owners of horses that may have been exposed to horses with EHM should work with their veterinarian to establish appropriate biosecurity and monitoring protocols such as:

- Isolating the horses that attended the event for 21 days after known exposure.
- Having the temperature of returning horses monitored twice daily for at least 14 days after the last known exposure. Fever greater than 101.5 may be the first indicator of disease.
- Clean and disinfect tack, boots, equipment, and grooming supplies.

- If elevated temperature, respiratory signs, or EHM-compatible clinical signs are noticed, contact your veterinarian.
- When doing feeding and chores, work with the returning horses last, wear boots and coveralls, and remove them before working with your other horses.
- Don't forget to wash your hands!

Clinical Signs of EHM in Horses

Fever
Lethargy
Nasal and/or Ocular discharge
Swelling of the legs
Lack of coordination
Hindlimb ataxia
Dribbling urine
Penile paralysis
Head tilt
Decreased tail tone
Abortion in pregnant mares

These symptoms are not specific to EHM. Diagnostic testing should be utilized to confirm EHV infection. If you suspect your horse is displaying symptoms consistent with an EHV-1 infection, contact your veterinarian immediately.

Information for Veterinarians

If you have a horse with signs of acute neurologic disease, please contact our office at **(919) 707-3250**. Your call will be returned as soon as possible. We will provide guidance on isolation and testing.

Diagnosis of EHV can be difficult as periods of viral shedding and viremia may vary. Paired samples, including nasal swab and whole blood, is critical.

Horses with confirmed EHM or exhibit neurological signs consistent with EHM are reportable to the state veterinarian's office.

Equine Herpes Virus

EHV-1 is spread from horse to horse through contact with nasal discharge or spread as aerosol droplets. Infected horses may not show clinical signs of the virus but may still act as carriers. Horses can also contract the virus by coming into contact with contaminated surfaces such as stalls, water, feed, tack, and transport vehicles. People can spread the virus from horse to horse by contaminated hands and clothing.

For more information on EHM: [A Guide To Understanding the Neurologic Form of EHV Infection](#)

Outbreak Investigation Ongoing

The extent of this outbreak is not yet fully known, and the situation is rapidly developing. The clinical presentation of EHV-1 in these horses appears to be acute with rapid progression and high clinical severity. Reports of increasing number of mortalities in horses suspected of having EHM are concerning. This underscores the need for proactive actions to curb the spread. We encourage all horse owners, veterinarians and event organizers to take this current outbreak seriously and implement procedures to mitigate further spread of the virus.

[AAEP Infectious Disease Guide: EHV](#)

[AAEP General Biosecurity Guidelines](#)

[TAHC Biosecurity Guide](#)

[Equine Disease Communication Center](#)

Sincerely,

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