



Equine Influenza February 2019 - FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. What vaccines contain the necessary viral strain to deal with the current outbreak?

Vaccinations currently licensed in Ireland which contain Florida Clade 1 are:

ProteqFlu E or TE – Merial

Equilis Prequenza TE – MSD Animal Health

2. If my horse has received its first two vaccinations but isn't due the third booster of the primary course yet, and I vaccinate it now will it change the vaccination schedule?

The mandatory emergency booster vaccination required by the IHRB does not impact your vaccination schedule. The horse can either

1. receive its third vaccination in due course in accordance with the original vaccination schedule, or
2. use the mandatory booster vaccination as the initial vaccination in a renewed schedule, with the second vaccination booster due between 21 and 92 days later. If this option is chosen the horse can continue to run in advance of getting the second vaccination booster in these extraordinary circumstances.

3. What is the rationale behind the 8 weeks?

Scientific evidence indicates that immunity following vaccination peaks and drops off within 4 weeks with reduced protection at 12 weeks. Under normal circumstances the mandatory vaccination program in place in Ireland provides adequate immunity for circulating viral challenge, but in the current extraordinary circumstances an extra immunity boost is needed. The 8 weeks' timeframe is a practical compromise based on expert advice from the Irish Equine Centre, an internationally-recognised (OIE) Reference Laboratory for Equine Influenza.

4. I vaccinated my horse at Christmas why do I need to do it again so soon?

As explained above, an 8-week interval is a practical response to boost the horses' immunity in the face of an outbreak to boost the overall herd immunity.

5. What is the benefit of vaccinating now?

We are the middle of an Equine Influenza outbreak – horses exposed to the virus need an immunity boost to avoid infection in the first place and/or recover faster.





6. If I vaccinate my horse will it interrupt my training program?

Modern vaccines do not contain live strains and do not usually cause a problem in the horse. The 6 day stand down is to allow the horse rest after the vaccination however the horse can usually continue its training after a few days.

7. Why are the IHRB stopping scoping on racedays?

Equine Influenza is an extremely contagious viral disease. It can be transmitted by air but also by objects including “scopes”. At this time the risk of transmission must be minimised and therefore any activity which may increase risk and is not strictly necessary must be temporarily suspended in the interests of safeguarding the horses and the industry as a whole.

8. Why are the IHRB not suspending racing?

We believe that with the enhanced measures as communicated on Friday 8th February the Industry can protect its horses sufficiently to avoid this being required.

9. If I vaccinate a horse in my care this week to allow the horse race in Ireland after February 18th, will I have to vaccinate again in another 8 weeks?

Hopefully not. The IHRB hopes that the measures taken now will ensure that your horse can continue to race without any further emergency mandatory booster vaccination being required. We will be reviewing the situation on an ongoing basis and any decision will be taken following consultation with the IEC and Veterinary Committee of IHRB.

10. Will all horses that race from now on have to be vaccinated with a vaccine containing clade 1?

For the moment – yes. However, as outlined above, we will be reviewing the situation on an ongoing basis and will issue further updates as they become available.

11. Will the IHRB require that horses coming to run from overseas are vaccinated with a vaccine containing clade 1?

Yes – as long as the requirement remains in place for Irish trained horses.





12. How do I know that the vaccination has worked and that everyone is doing it?

Vaccination records will continue to be checked as now. The IHRB may conduct testing to support this and any trainer found in breach of the rule may be referred to the Referrals Committee.

13. Are there adequate supplies of vaccine?

We believe so. The IHRB are in regular contact with both companies supplying the vaccines. They have increased their supply to wholesalers both in light of the need from racing and breeding.

14. I intend to run my horse at one of the following race meetings or Point to Points, what is the date range during which my horse must have received its most recent vaccination containing the Clade 1 virus, to ensure that the horse is qualified to run on the day?

Racemeeting

Punchestown Feb 20th:

Thurles Feb 21st:

Dundalk Feb 22nd:

Fairyhouse Feb 23rd:

Naas Feb 24th:

Date Range that most recent vacc must fall into

December 26th - February 13th

December 27th - February 14th

December 28th - February 15th

December 29th - February 16th

December 30th - February 17th

Point to Point

Tynan and Armagh (F) Feb 23rd:

Duhallow (F) Feb 24th:

Bray (H) Feb 24th:

Date Range that most recent vacc must fall into

December 29th - February 16th

December 30th - February 17th

December 30th - February 17th





15. Can I run overseas if I adhere to the guidance set out above?

If you wish to run overseas, you should check what is required with the overseas authority well in advance of your race so as to give yourself time to comply with any requirements that may be in place.

Irish trainers should note that before running a horse in Great Britain you must provide a negative result for Equine Influenza from a nasopharyngeal swab (PCR) to the BHA, prior to that horse's arrival in Great Britain. The swab must have been taken within 72 hours of entry into Great Britain. Results should be emailed to equine@britishhorseracing.com.

All horses must have received a vaccination against equine influenza within 6 months of the day of the race, but not on any of the 6 days before the day of the race.

For runners in Great Britain there is also a Health Declaration Form. This must be completed by the Responsible Person for all horses on the day of the race. A copy of the form should be presented at the Racecourse Stables Office together with the horse's passport – these documents **MUST** be presented **BEFORE** the horse is unloaded. The form requires you to provide a temperature for the horse, taken prior to travel. The form is downloadable [here](#).

For further information, please contact the British Horseracing Authority.

16. What happens next?

The situation will be monitored and the IHRB will make a decision in two weeks on whether or not the emergency mandatory booster vaccination requirement is to be continued. Any changes will be communicated to you.

For further information, please contact: Denis Egan, Chief Executive Phone: +353 45445600

Date: 13th February 2019

Editor's Note:

1. Testing for equine influenza is provided **free of charge by the Irish Equine Centre (IEC)** – it is recommended that any trainer with any concerns should avail of this in order to establish their horses' disease status. As with any contagious infectious disease outbreak, **rapid diagnosis and effective management is key to recovery and minimising spread of disease.**
2. **Trainers and handlers who have concerns or questions in relation to equine influenza should contact:**





The IEC on +353 (0)45 866266 or iec@irishequinecentre.ie and/or Dr. Lynn Hillyer, Chief Veterinary Officer IHRB on +353 87 1925 366

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