

The Importance of Coggins Testing



A Coggins test is a blood test administered by a veterinarian that detects antibodies to the disease, Equine Infectious Anemia (EIA). EIA is also known as Swamp Fever. The name comes from the high incidence of biting insects that surround wet or swampy areas. Horses affected with EIA can have fevers, edema, anemia, weight loss and muscle wasting. Depending on the severity and sub-type of the disease, sudden death may occur. Some horses may recover from the symptoms within a day, but will remain carriers of the disease for the rest of their life. Carriers of EIA may show no

outward signs of the disease, but will serve as a source of disease transmission to other horses.

EIA is transmitted by flying, biting insects such as deer flies, horse flies and mosquitoes. This means your horse does not have to travel to be at risk. Contrary to common belief, the Coggins test is not a vaccine or treatment for EIA – it is simply a diagnostic method to determine if the horse is infected or not.

The test itself was developed by Dr. Leroy Coggins, a veterinarian with a PhD in virology. He studied African Swine Fever in Kenya and translated his findings to develop the test for EIA. It was approved by the USDA in 1973 and serves as a tool in helping limit the incidence of Equine Infectious Anemia.

When is a Coggin's test required?

Coggins tests are generally required if you travel or show out of province, but many breeding and boarding facilities, as well as arenas, require proof of a current negative Coggins test in order to use their services.

What does Coggin's paperwork include?

A Coggin's test will have your horse's name, description and the test results. It is generally valid for 6 months, but may differ by area – check with your vet to be certain. The test is generally quite affordable, but can increase in cost depending on your proximity to the vet clinic and other factors.

What happens if your horse receives a positive Coggin's result?

Unfortunately, a horse that tests positive for EIA must be euthanized or quarantined. A horse that is quarantined must be branded as a carrier and kept in a screened and carefully monitored stall for the rest of its life, and may not come within a specific distance of other horses. This distance will depend on your location. Governing bodies keep strict regulations regarding the kind of environment an EIA-positive horse may be kept in, and you may be fortunate to find a non-profit sanctuary that specializes in EIA quarantine. However, many owners do opt for euthanasia.

But wasn't EIA eradicated?

It was thought that EIA was eradicated in the United States, but that is a common misconception. While the numbers of EIA-positive horses have been drastically reduced, the disease has not been completely eliminated. Prior to routine testing, approximately 3% of horses were EIA-positive. Since routine testing was introduced, the numbers have decreased to 0.02% of horses overall testing positive. Since 1980, the majority of EIA carriers were asymptomatic, so it's very important that we continue routine testing to identify carriers and ensure that large outbreaks don't take place.

EQUINE INFECTIOUS ANEMIA TEST RECORD

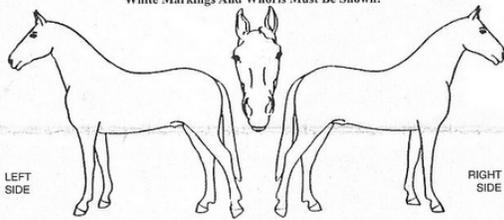
Print name and address legibly for window envelope use

I hereby certify that the blood specimen submitted with this form was drawn by me from the animal described below on the date indicated.

Dr. _____		DATE BLED _____	SIGNATURE _____
Address _____		City _____	State _____ Zip _____
Owner _____	Reason for Test: 1. Clinical _____ 2. Infected _____ 3. Exposed _____ 4. Show _____ 5. Sale _____ 6. Routine _____ 7. Other _____	Animal Stabled At _____	Address _____
Address _____	Zip _____	County _____	TOWN _____
Phone _____	Farm No. (OBSP) _____		

TUBE NUMBER	NAME	COLOR	BREED	SEX* Check One			AGE	TEST RESULTS
				S	M	G		

White Markings And Whorls Must Be Shown!



LEFT SIDE

RIGHT SIDE

Date and condition of samples received _____

The result of the test for Equine Infectious Anemia on the above specimen is as indicated

Signature _____

Accession No. _____

WHITE COPY — VETERINARIAN