



**Cornell University**  
Cornell Center for Animal Resources and Education

CARE622.01 **Veterinary Horse Care**

The intent of this standard operating procedure (SOP) is to describe veterinary horse care as a standard reference for personnel providing routine care for horses. This SOP is approved by the Cornell Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) and the Cornell Center for Animal Resources and Education (CARE). Any exemption must be approved by the IACUC prior to its application.

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

1. Introduction
2. Materials
3. Procedures
4. Safety
5. Contingencies
6. References

---

**1. Introduction**

- a. The purpose of this SOP is to assure all horses used by, or owned by, Cornell receive care in a manner acceptable with current veterinary practices.
- b. Animal care staff is defined as anyone responsible for the daily care of any animal within Cornell's animal facilities.

**2. Materials**

- a. Individual medical history record for each horse.
- b. Vaccines as defined in section 3,a,i.

**3. Procedures**

- a. Preventive Medicine
  - i. Physical Health Status
    1. Perform a veterinary physical examination annually; record observations and assessments in each horse's individual health record.
    2. Perform and record corrective general maintenance (e.g. hoof trimming) as determined by personnel trained in proper equine care and management.
    3. Perform and record corrective veterinary care (e.g. dental maintenance) as determined by the facility veterinarian.
  - ii. Vaccination

1. Vaccinate all horses in a herd on the same schedule when appropriate for the vaccine being used, to optimize herd immunity.
  2. Use only federally licensed vaccines according to manufacturer's recommendations for storage, handling and routes of administration.
  3. Administer vaccines by or under direct supervision of a veterinarian.
  4. Vaccinate all horses against rabies, eastern equine encephalitis, western equine encephalitis, equine herpes virus 4, influenza, and tetanus. Other vaccinations will be at the discretion of the attending veterinarian and the PI.
- iii. Coggins Test-Transported Horses Only  
Ensure that every horse over 6 months of age is tested for Equine Infectious Anemia (Coggins Test) at intervals not to exceed 24 months, and more frequently as required for international, interstate, or within New York State travel
- iv. Internal parasite control:  
Each facility will have an internal parasite control program as part of its facility SOP.

**Note:** Specific facility procedures will not be addressed here due to the diverse nature of Cornell facilities, varying stocking densities, and exposures.

- v. Additions to the herd: refer to CARE SOP 609 "Introduction of New Horses".

b. Illness, Injury, or Abnormal Behavior

- i. When health concerns are found, consult the applicable facility SOP to identify the individuals that are to be notified. They may include:
  - a. PI or his/her designate
  - b. Facility manager
  - c. College of Veterinary Medicine (CVM) Ambulatory and Production Medicine
  - d. CARE personnel
- ii. The CARE veterinarian, affiliated veterinarian, or CVM Ambulatory and Production Medicine veterinarian will evaluate the animal to determine the proper course of treatment. A reasonable attempt will be made to contact the PI for notification and consultation prior to the initiation of treatment.
- iii. Post a sheet identifying the horse, the PI, protocol number, CARE pager number, PI (or designate) emergency contact number and feeding instructions on each stall or holding pen.
- iv. If pen design does not allow for direct posting, place the illness/treatment sheet in a conveniently accessible location.
- v. In pastures there are weather protected devices at all outdoor sites for the identification information listed.

- vi. Make a notation of the illness, date, and time noted in the animal's individual medical record/health history.

**Note:** In the event of an emergency, the attending veterinarian, affiliated veterinarian, or CVM Large Animal Ambulatory Unit veterinarian can treat or euthanize an animal without the PI's authorization if it is in the best interest of the animal and the PI cannot be contacted.

- vii. Record all treatments (e.g. drug, dosage, route of administration, & date) and illness related observations in the individual animal health record. The person entering this information in the health record must initial each entry.

**Note:** Do not use expired drugs or medical supplies.

#### c. Unexpected Deaths

- viii. Managers or their designee, or the Principal Investigator will investigate all animal fatalities and ensure the facility manager, PI or his/her designate, large animal Ambulatory Service (where applicable), and CARE have all been notified.
- ix. Upon review of the situation, disposition of the animal will be determined.
- x. Record mortalities on the daily summary of animal health observations located on the animal room door or animal housing area.

## 4. Safety

- a. Horses can cause fatal injuries; use an assistant to restrain horses during physical examination, injections, blood sampling or similar procedures, please refer to CARE SOP 707- Animal Related Injury.
- b. Horses have the potential to transmit disease to humans, please refer to the CARE Zoonosis web page for details.
- c. Horses have the potential to create allergies in humans, please refer to Cornell University's Environmental Health & Safety information regarding animal related allergens.

## 5. Contingencies

- a. In the event of an animal emergency: the veterinary service as designated by the IACUC protocol should be notified immediately. CARE veterinarians can be reached by paging CARE at 1-800-349-2456 and the large animal Ambulatory Service can be reached at 607-253-3140.

## 6. References

- CARE SOP 607-[Treatment](http://www.research.cornell.edu/care/documents/SOPs/CARE607.pdf) of Sick Animals:  
<http://www.research.cornell.edu/care/documents/SOPs/CARE607.pdf>
- CARE SOP 609-Acquisition and Introduction of New Horses:  
<http://www.research.cornell.edu/care/documents/SOPs/CARE609.pdf>
- CARE SOP 707-Animal Related Injury:  
<http://www.research.cornell.edu/care/documents/SOPs/CARE707.pdf>
- CARE Zoonosis Web Page:  
<http://www.research.cornell.edu/care/zoonoses.html>
- Cornell Animal Related Allergen Information:  
<http://www.research.cornell.edu/Care/documents/OHS/AllergyPreventionFactSheet.pdf>
- F003.01 Medical Record Part 1:  
[http://www.research.cornell.edu/care/Documents/Forms/F003.01%20Medical%20Record%20Part%201%20\(Summary\).doc](http://www.research.cornell.edu/care/Documents/Forms/F003.01%20Medical%20Record%20Part%201%20(Summary).doc)
- [F004.01 Medical Record Part 2:](http://www.research.cornell.edu/care/Documents/Forms/F004.01%20Medical%20Record%20Part%202.doc)  
<http://www.research.cornell.edu/care/Documents/Forms/F004.01%20Medical%20Record%20Part%202.doc>

---

Written by/date :  
Todd Pavak  
July 2007

Effective date :  
June 2006

Review date :  
September 2008

Referee:  
Jon Spears

SOP :  
CARE622.01