

Parasites

Common parasites found in equine feces are (but not limited to):

1. Strongile
2. Pin Worms
3. Tape Worms
4. Ascarid

Life cycle:

- Total life cycle takes 28 days
- Adult lays eggs and are passed through feces
- Eggs are passed from an infected horse to uninfected horse in feces (can live in the environment for many years, regardless of how hard or long the freeze period is)
- Egg hatches and becomes larvae, larvae is eaten by a grazing horse
- Larvae migrates through the horse's body and then back into digestive tract to become and adult
- Adult produces egg, egg is passed through feces into pasture.

Maintenance:

- Deworm every 6-8 weeks
- Start at 1 month of age
- For tapeworms use a double dose of strongid (or Equimax) 1 month after frost in the fall and in the spring
 - Equimax is labeled for pregnant mares
- Rotate other dewormers every 6-8 weeks (panacur, strongid, ivomec)
 - Moxidectin (Quest) cannot be used in foals
- If the horse is on a daily dewormer, then double dose strongid (or Equimax) 1 month after frost and then use Ivermectin at least 2 other times during the year
- Recommend fecal exam 1-2 times annually, fecal can be brought to the clinic to be run. Collect, keep cool until transport.

Parasite Control

Several factors come into play when dealing with persistent parasite issues. Weather conditions, especially dry, can be a big contributor to parasite issues. Parasite eggs can build up in pastures from year to year. The more horses turned out in a pasture or paddock the greater the potential for a large parasite load. The parasite egg is very resilient and survives from year to year creating a greater exposure to infestation each year. Parasites can also build up a resistance to dewormers which is why we recommend rotation of deworming products.

Regardless of the success you have achieved in the past with parasite control, it is necessary to periodically check fecal samples to determine parasite loads. We recommend a minimum once yearly fecal check, and a twice yearly is preferred. Other preventative measures to be taken are:

- Do not over graze pastures
- Rotate pastures, or create new pasture areas whenever possible
- Keep pastures as clear of feces as possible
- Aerate pastures as often as possible
- Plow and reseed pastures regularly
- Deworm frequently, every 6-8 weeks if possible
- Rotate dewormers, focusing on active ingredient, based on fecal exam
- Isolate new horses and deworm them before turning them into pastures or paddocks used by other horses
- Haul manure as soon as is possible
- Remove manure regularly from stalls and small paddocks
- Question boarding facility requirements for deworming
- Check fecal samples!

Every farm or stable is different and requires individual parasite control measures. The only way to know that you are using adequate measures to control parasites is to do fecal exams. Please contact us if you have any questions about your parasite control program.