



VT-NH Veterinary Clinic

38 East-West Road • East Dummerston, VT 05346

Tel: 802-254-5422 • www.vtnhvet.com

Equine deworming recommendations

Effectiveness of dewormers and parasite resistance are current topics of concern in equine medicine. There are reported cases of small strongyles being resistant to many commonly used dewormers and there are **no new classes** of anti-parasitic drugs on the horizon. This has led us to change our recommendations regarding how we treat parasites in horses. The newer recommendations center around "targeted deworming" and identifying horses who are more susceptible to infection/shedding of parasites and treating them. Even horses on a deworming program or daily dewormer should be checked as they may develop parasites that are resistant to these medications requiring special treatment. Horses on the same farm may have differing levels of infection based on age, health, and immune status so it is important to check all horses and follow up on those that appear to be affected.

Here are the basics:

- 1) You will need to deworm all horses twice yearly** (after the first frost and again in the spring) with an ivermectin or moxidectin product to kill large strongyles and bots. Moxidectin also kills encysted strongyles that live in the wall of the gut, so it is a good idea to make sure to use that as one of your minimum twice yearly dewormings. In addition, at least one of these dewormers should contain praziquantal to kill tapeworms which are not always found on fecal examination.
- 2) We are recommending fecal egg counts be done on ALL horses in the spring PRIOR to giving any dewormers**, this will help to identify horses who are heavily infected and may require continual deworming. It is estimated that only 20% of horses will be "heavy shedders" and need to continue on a regular deworming program every 8-12 weeks throughout the spring, summer & fall. These horses should also have an additional fecal egg count 2 weeks after deworming to determine if the parasites are being effectively killed by the dewormer(s) selected.
- 3) It is estimated that 80% of horses will fall into the not infected or "low shedder" category.** In general, these horses do not require deworming beyond twice yearly Through the spring, summer, and fall these horses should have fecal egg counts checked every 8-12 weeks to see if additional deworming is needed.
- 4) Horses under 2 years of age should be routinely dewormed every 8 weeks due to risk of roundworm infection.** See targeted program on next page.

Please start by submitting a sample (one manure ball per horse is adequate) in a plastic bag or container labeled with the horse's name, deworming history, your name & date. The sample can be refrigerated but should be < 24 hours old and not frozen. The best time to get this sample would be in the spring prior to giving any dewormers, it must be a minimum of 9 weeks after fenbendazole/oxibendazole/pyrantel pamoate, 12 weeks after giving any ivermectin product, or 16 weeks after giving moxidectin. You can bring these samples to the office or we would be happy to collect them during your horse's spring visit.



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	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December
Horse												
Low Shedder				A recheck FEC BEFORE deworming								B
Medium Shedder				A recheck FEC BEFORE deworming			C					B
High Shedder				A recheck FEC BEFORE deworming	recheck fecal to confirm dewormer works	C		A				B
Foals	Just born! Give nothing		2 months D		4 months - 1st FEC then D		6 months D		8 months A Incl praziquantel		10 months C	

A= Ivermectin

B= Quest Plus

C= Anthelcide EQ & Strongid

D = Panacur, Strongid, Anthelcide EQ, Ivermectin

Environmental management for parasites:

- For small paddocks or stable areas, pick up manure frequently. It takes a minimum of 3 days for strongyle eggs to reach the infective stage (L3), so removing manure more frequently than this will help prevent transmission.
- For pastures, limit the number of horses grazing in any given area. Given enough room, horses will naturally avoid grazing in areas where they have left manure.
- Do not drag pastures while horses are using them, as this will spread the parasite eggs into the grazing areas. Drag pastures during the hot, dry summer months and ideally they should be left vacant for 4 weeks after dragging. Avoid dragging pastures in the spring or fall as the increased moisture allows parasites to survive longer.
- Only spread manure on pastures/grazing areas after it has been composted thoroughly.