

## How Do You Prevent and Control Equine Strangles?

Strangles can be prevented from spreading by taking the following precautions:

- Isolate new equine for 30 days if possible before introducing them to the herd. During isolation, check rectal temperatures daily for evidence of fever. Because fever usually develops two days before bacteria shedding, early detection of fever may prevent further transmission.
- Any newly isolated equine with a nasal discharge should be examined by a veterinarian. Prompt diagnosis is important to prevent additional spread.
- If an equine is infected, stop all movement of equine both on and off the infected premises.
- Disinfect stalls, water troughs, tack, and grooming utensils that have come in contact with infected equine. Phenolic disinfectants are recommended in equine facilities. Bleach and quaternary ammonium compounds quickly become inactivated with organic matter; therefore it is important to thoroughly clean surfaces prior disinfection. Do not mix equipment between infected and non-infected animals.
- The Strangles bacteria can be inactivated by drying and sunlight.
- Use strict biosecurity measure and disinfection measures for personnel on infected premises. Povidone iodine and chlorhexidine gluconate are recommended disinfectants for hand washing.
- Wash hands, arms, footwear, etc. immediately after handling infected animals. If possible, assign one person to handle affected equine to avoid contact with health equine. Do not handle non-infected equine after handling infected equine prior thorough disinfection.
- Bedding associated with infected equine should be disposed in a manner to prevent exposure to other equine. Ideal methods include permanently discarding the bedding by burial, composting under cover, or bagging the bedding for disposal in a landfill. Disposal sites should not be contaminate other equine locations due to storm water runoff or flying insects.
- Implement strict fly control measures by installing screens, electronic fly killers, and using insecticides.

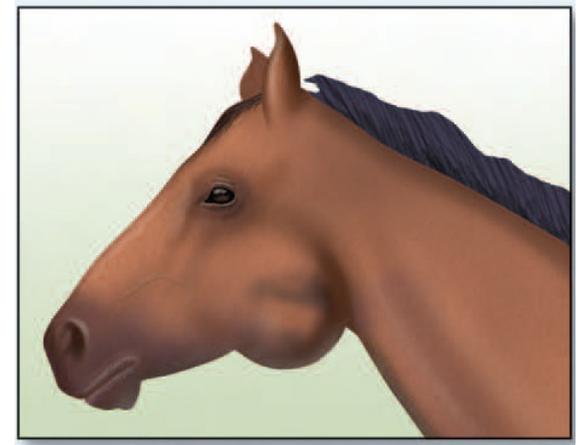
**Veterinarians are required to report a clinical diagnosis or laboratory confirmation of Equine Strangles to the State Veterinarian within 24 hours or by the close of the next business day.**

The Georgia Department of Agriculture will conduct an investigation to determine if self-isolation or quarantine is appropriate to prevent the potential spread of the disease. To report Strangles or for more information, call the State Veterinarian's Office with the Georgia Department of Agriculture at **1-800-282-5852, ext. 3667 or 404-6456-3667.**



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## Equine Strangles



### A Reportable Disease in Georgia

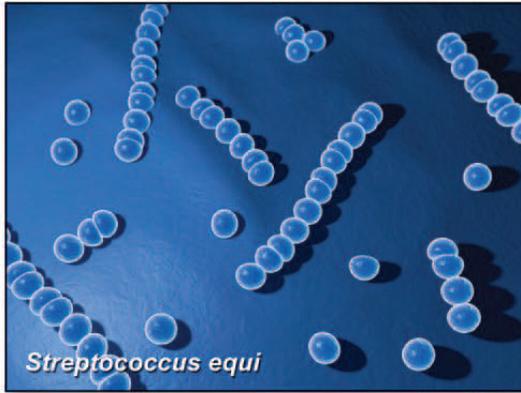


Gary W. Black, Commissioner

Georgia Department of Agriculture  
1-800-282-5852, ext. 3667 or  
404-656-3667

## What is Strangles?

Strangles is an easily transmitted disease that is seen worldwide in Equidae. It is caused by a bacterium called *Streptococcus equi*. More than one strain of the bacteria may exist. While usually occurring in juveniles, equine of any age lacking adequate immunity from previous infection or vaccination may succumb to the disease. Immunity from previous infection and/or vaccination is not life-long. The disease is not communicable to humans.

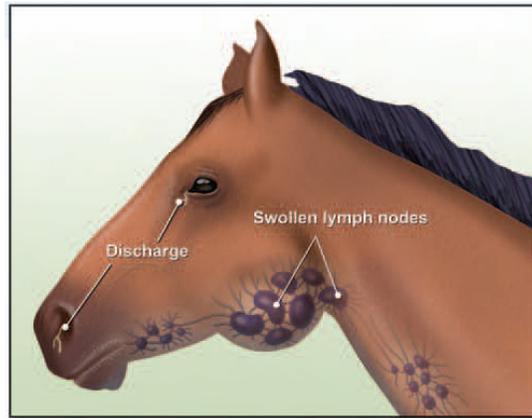


## What Does Strangles Look Like?

Equine with Strangles typically have swollen and /or abscessed lymph nodes around the head and neck, and a high fever. The most common clinical signs of Strangles include:

- Thick yellow discharge from nostrils and eyes
- Swollen yellow nodes of the head and neck, often draining puss
- Difficulty in swallowing, often with an extended neck
- Fever up to 106°
- Depressed with decreased appetite
- Coughing

A veterinarian should examine the animal to ensure an accurate diagnosis



## How Are Equine Infected?

Strangles is highly contagious and easily transmitted through bacteria found in discharges from an infected animal. Coughing will aerosolize the bacteria throughout the immediate airstream. Equine are typically infected by inhaling the organism or through direct contact with contaminated buckets, grooming equipment, or contaminated insects. The incubation period is typically 3-14 days and disease normally runs its course in 2-4 weeks. However, equine may continue to shed the bacteria 4 weeks to 8 months after clinical signs subside. Therefore, affected animals should be isolated from unexposed equine for prolonged periods. Convalescing equine may become chronic carriers. Some animals may develop immunity post-infection, while others are susceptible to re-infection.

## Can Strangles Be Fatal

Nearly 100% of the animals in an exposed herd may be infected, but the mortality rate is typically less than 2%. Infected equine may experience pupura hemorrhagica which is a rare and sometimes fatal acute autoimmune disease causing generalized hemorrhage. The few number of equine that die typically suffer from nervous system infections, pneumonia, or abscesses in the internal organs. Strangles gets its descriptive name due to the swollen lymph nodes that may cause airway obstruction and death due to inadequate oxygen supply.

## What Are Complications Of Strangles?

Strangles may damage the heart and kidneys, and cause anemia and immune system disorders. A form known as "Bastard Strangles" may occur if abscesses develop in unusual areas of the body, such as the abdomen or chest cavity. Significant danger occurs when these abscesses rupture. "Bastard Strangles" occurs due to immune system failure or overwhelming and rapid spread of the bacteria throughout the body.

## What Is A Reportable Disease, And Why is Strangles Reportable?

A disease may be considered reportable to the State Veterinarian if it is characterized by rapid spread, having a severe negative impact on the economy, or endangering public health. The Georgia Department of Agriculture (GDA) identified Strangles as a reportable disease because Georgia equestrians requested helping determining the number of cases in the state and identifying the magnitude of the disease spread. GDA's objective encompasses these goals in addition to disease prevention and containment.

## Is There a Vaccine?

Multiple vaccines are currently available in the U.S., including intranasal and injectable forms. Vaccination may provide the most benefit in herds in which Strangles already exists. Vaccination in other circumstances may not be as effective. Side effect from vaccination may include abscess formation at the site of the injection or a mild respiratory reaction. A veterinarian should be consulted for vaccination recommendations on any particular farm.

## Can Equine Strangles Be Treated?

Infected equine should be immediately isolated from other equine. A veterinarian should examine the animal and provide medical advice and treatment. Complete rest and nursing care should be a part of the treatment regimen. Hot compresses applied to abscesses may expedite rupture and healing. Affected equine should be fed soft, palatable feed if having trouble swallowing.