



## Staying Ahead of Equine Influenza

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Equine influenza virus (EIV) is one of the most common infectious upper respiratory diseases in the horse. It spreads rapidly with clinical signs appearing within 24 to 72 hours following exposure and can be transmitted more than 50 yards through the air by a coughing horse. In an unvaccinated horse population that has never been exposed to the virus, EIV has a nearly 100 percent infection rate. And like human flu vaccines, equine flu vaccines must periodically be updated to protect against the strains currently circulating in the field and threatening horses.

### Combatting today's threat

Influenza viruses are constantly changing at the molecular level as they pass from one host to another. This process, known as antigenic drift, leads to new virus strains that a horse's immune system may not recognize. Due to the changes that can occur with EIV, it is paramount to use effective vaccines with relevant strains to aid in providing the best protection against viruses currently circulating.

Through the Merck Animal Health ongoing upper respiratory surveillance program, a new, highly infectious, and relevant equine influenza strain was identified. It is the foundation of the PRESTIGE® flu-containing inactivated virus vaccines from Merck Animal Health, which represent the most current equine influenza protection available for the horse.

The Merck Animal Health flu-containing vaccines now include this highly relevant clade 1 strain, as well as clade 2 protection – as recommended by the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) Expert Surveillance Panel on Equine Influenza and American Association of Equine Practitioners. Although there have been no clade 2 influenza outbreaks in the U.S., clade 2 protection is considered an additional safeguard for horses that travel internationally.

For more information on the updated flu vaccines from Merck Animal Health, visit <https://www.merck-animal-health-equine.com/prestige>.