

# Facts About: The Hendra vaccine

Hendra virus is deadly to horses and life threatening to humans. Administering the Hendra vaccine helps protect your horse, family, friends and colleagues.

Zoetis is proud of the research that led to the development of Equivac® HeV which has proven effective in over 300,000 doses administered to date.



## Facts About:

### Research Studies & Permits

CSIRO conducted several years of Hendra vaccine research in a laboratory setting. Once proven in this setting, challenge studies were performed to ensure the vaccine was effective in preventing Hendra virus infection in horses.

In challenge studies, horses were exposed to up to one-million times more virus than they are likely to face in their natural environment.<sup>1</sup> All studies showed there was no evidence of Hendra virus infection in any Hendra-vaccinated horse.

Field studies were also conducted on larger groups of horses to study the safety of the vaccine. In these field studies, the only reactions seen were temporary injection site swellings in some horses.

The Hendra vaccine is available in Australia under an approved minor use permit, issued by the Government regulatory agency, the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority (APVMA).

A minor use permit is only issued when a product meets the exact same safety and efficacy requirements as a registered product.

**The Hendra vaccine has been subjected to the same extensive safety and efficacy testing that all animal health vaccines must go through before being approved for use in horses.**



## Facts About:

### Vaccine Reactions

When people get a vaccine from their doctor, it is expected that they will have a sore arm after the injection. Some horses may also respond with a mild injection site reaction after vaccination, and this is no reason for concern.

With over 300,000 doses of Equivac HeV administered, reactions have only been reported for 0.28% of vaccinated horses, with the vast majority of these being injection site reactions, which resolve with little or no treatment.<sup>3</sup>

Compare this with humans who get a vaccination: up to 80% of people who receive a tetanus vaccination will experience a minor reaction at the site of the injection.<sup>2</sup>

**The Hendra vaccine has not caused a single horse death.**

**While there have been rumours of this, they relate to horses that died of snake-bite, grain ingestion, twisted gut and other unrelated health issues.**

12 horses have died of Hendra virus over the past two years because they were not vaccinated and six horse owners in 2014 alone have had to be given an experimental monoclonal antibody treatment as a result of high exposure to Hendra virus from these infected horses.<sup>4</sup>



“ The Hendra vaccine has been subject to the same level of rigorous safety and efficacy testing as other vaccines on the equine market.

Dr Deborah Middleton: *Research Team Leader and Senior Veterinary Pathologist, CSIRO* ”

## Facts About:

# Reporting Vaccine Reactions

All companies that make animal health medicines have an obligation to report suspected reactions to the APVMA.

Zoetis takes this obligation very seriously and passes on all reports to the APVMA regardless of whether the reaction is likely to be caused by the product or not.

If horse owners suspect their horse has had a vaccine reaction, they should report this to their vet, Zoetis or the APVMA.

When investigating a reported reaction, Zoetis may contact the horse owner and any vets involved to gather all information for a comprehensive report, which is sent to the APVMA.

The APVMA make an independent assessment of Zoetis' report.

Zoetis takes reporting extremely seriously. To submit a suspected vaccine reaction report to Zoetis, phone 1800 813 884.

## Facts About:

# Hendra Virus Protection From people you can trust

“ At Coolmore, over 500 horses are vaccinated against Hendra virus with no reactions reported.

The dangers of the Hendra virus are well documented and we are vaccinating our resident broodmares as a precaution.

While Coolmore is not located in a high-risk area, we deem it prudent to be proactive in terms of protecting against the risks posed by the disease.

The continued good health of our horses and staff is of paramount importance to us.

We hope other studs in the Hunter Valley, and around Australia, follow Coolmore's example of vaccinating the horses under its care.

Dr Pdraig Kelly: *Coolmore Resident Veterinarian* ”

## Megan Jones: Olympic Silver Medalist, 3-Day Eventer

“ Our stud farm is based in the Adelaide Hills where there is a risk of Hendra virus from fruit bats. In addition, a number of our horses and our clients' horses travel interstate for competitions, which also poses a risk.

Contracting Hendra virus is a risk we are just not prepared to take, so every horse on our stud is vaccinated.

When you vaccinate a horse or a child, you do consider reactions that might happen; however, a small reaction like muscle soreness for a couple of days is negligible compared to the threat of the Hendra virus.

Across our entire stud, we have seen only one minor site reaction, which was temporary and not threatening to the horse's health.

I would recommend all horse owners vaccinate against the Hendra virus, no question. ”

## Facts About:

# The Hendra Vaccine

- Years of credible, Australian based research with the CSIRO
- Proven safety and immunity against the Hendra virus
- Most reactions are similar to those that people would expect when receiving a simple tetanus vaccine and are much less common
- Not one horse has died from administration of the Hendra vaccine
- The Hendra virus itself, not the vaccine, is a deadly threat to your horse
- Administering the Hendra vaccine offers peace of mind for the safety of your horse, family, friends and colleagues

Equivac HeV and its active constituent are not registered. An application for registration/approval of the product and active constituent has been submitted to APVMA.

<sup>1</sup> Dr Deborah Middleton, personal communication

<sup>2</sup> World Health Organization: Information Sheet - Observed Rate of Vaccine Reactions Diphtheria, Pertussis, Tetanus Vaccines. Available online via: [www.who.int/vaccine\\_safety/initiative/tools/DTP\\_vaccine\\_rates\\_information\\_sheet.pdf](http://www.who.int/vaccine_safety/initiative/tools/DTP_vaccine_rates_information_sheet.pdf)  
Date accessed: 26 November, 2014

<sup>3</sup> Zoetis – Data on File

<sup>4</sup> Dr Peter Reid, personal communication

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