



Good news, they are not lethal, bad news, they can still be a pain in the . . .

While not as harmful as other parasites, pinworms can definitely be an irritation for both horse and owner. If you see signs, address this itchy pest before infestation spreads.

A little about pinworms

Pinworms have the most efficient life cycle of all the parasites that infect the horse. They don't migrate through any organ tissue, and they have developed a means of reproduction by which the eggs don't leave the herd of horses. While the horse is relaxed or sleeping, female pinworms crawl out of the horse's rectum, deposit eggs and a sticky substance on the perianal region of the horse, and then crawl back into the rectum. Infective pinworm eggs are ingested orally by the horse, and once in the colon, the larvae develop through various stages, which are then able to reproduce in about five months. As horses migrate, they take the eggs and adults with them.

What to look for?

Keep an eye out for skin irritation around the anus area, rubbing of the tail, as well as biting and licking of hindquarters. In some situations, changes in behavior such as nervousness and loss of appetite may occur. Due to their life cycle, fecal tests are not a reliable method for detecting pinworm infestation. Veterinarians sometimes use the "scotch tape test". This method uses tape that is pressed on the anal area and is then examined under a microscope.

Pinworm eggs are picked up by horses from contaminated feed, water buckets, and bedding, as well as tail wraps, grooming materials, and even fence posts and stalls. The female pinworm deposits eggs around the anus. The eggs develop into an infective stage in just a few days, secreting a substance which can cause intense itching.

The typical infected horse will go in search of places to rub their bottom in an effort to relieve the itching. When a horse scratches itself, residue from this sticky substance can be left on surfaces. The larvae can also drop into the paddock or stable floor. Because of these circumstances, horses are vulnerable to becoming infected and/or re-infected for up to four (4) months.



What to do?

Pinworm infestations are not easy to get rid of. Good stable management practice is needed, in addition to the proper dewormer.

For your horse - thoroughly cleanse the anus/tail and other affected areas before administering an appropriate dewormer.

For the stable - disinfect grooming kits, water and feed buckets, as well as other items the horse has rubbed on or come into contact with.

Interestingly enough, a close relative of the pinworm is not uncommon in children. David Ellefson, DVM, Bimeda Inc., notes "Pyrantel is still the drug-of-choice for pinworms in children. It is safe and highly effective. With regards to horses, many owners are noticing pinworm issues, even after

using other dewormer groups, such as macrocyclic lactones or benzimidazoles. Pyrantel offers a very safe, very effective answer to persistent pinworms in horses."

Bimeda encourages horse owners to consult their veterinarian for assistance in the diagnosis, treatment, and control of parasitism.

Bimeda's full line of equine dewormers includes: Equimax® (ivermectin/praziquantel), Bimectin® and Equell® (1.87% ivermectin) and Exodus® and Exodus® Multi-Dose (pyrantel pamoate). In addition, Bimeda manufactures a wide variety of Veterinary prescription health care products.

**Information on Bimeda and Bimeda products can be found at BimedaEquine.com and EquimaxHorse.com
You may also contact Bimeda by email at: info@bimeda.us**