



# HENDRA VIRUS – WHAT’S YOUR RISK?

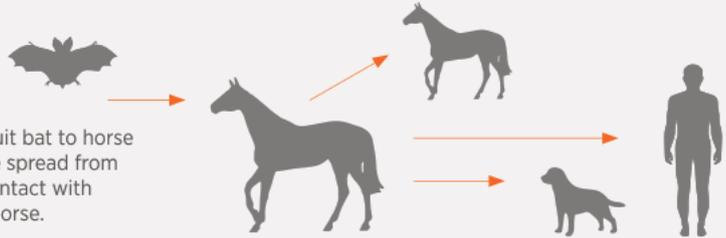
The Hendra virus (HeV) causes a potentially deadly viral disease that can spread from horses to humans. Hendra virus has only ever been reported in Australia. First detected in the Brisbane suburb of Hendra in 1994, outbreaks have since been recorded from Cairns in the north to Kempsey in the south. Bats with evidence of viral exposure have been found as far south as King Island and as far west as Adelaide.

## WHERE DOES HENDRA VIRUS COME FROM?

Fruit bats (flying foxes) are the natural hosts of the Hendra virus.

## HOW IS HENDRA VIRUS SPREAD?

It is thought that the Hendra virus is most likely transmitted from fruit bat to horse via the ingestion by the horse of bat urine. Hendra virus can then be spread from horse-to-horse, horse-to-dog and horse-to-human through close contact with respiratory secretions, blood or other body fluids from an infected horse.



## WIDESPREAD RISK

A three-year study by government scientists published in 2015 sought to predict where and when future outbreaks of the Hendra virus may occur.

The results show potential risk in locations where outbreaks have not been previously documented.

Flying fox urine was collected from beneath roost trees (where flying foxes spend the night) over a period of three years at 27 locations from Cairns in North QLD to Batemans Bay, south of Sydney. The urine was examined for the presence of the Hendra Virus.

The study revealed that it is most likely black flying foxes and spectacled flying foxes that excrete the virus. If these bats were present then the scientists were more likely to find virus in the urine collected.

From South-Eastern QLD down to Sydney, there was more virus found in winter. This correlates with when most outbreaks have been seen in those areas. In the north of QLD virus was found year-round.



**Virus was most consistently found in roosts from Southern QLD to the Hunter Valley NSW**

**Mid-North Coast NSW** – roosts in this coastal region (Alstonville to Singleton) had higher levels of virus and virus was present on more occasions than areas which have seen multiple horse deaths.

**Wingham** – more virus found year-round here than at many other locations.

**Singleton** – more virus detected in this roost than in Cairns, Bundaberg or Lismore. All locations which have experienced outbreaks with horse deaths.

**Sydney** – virus found in the Royal Botanical Gardens and Centennial Park.

## WHY YOU SHOULD VACCINATE YOUR HORSE WITH EQUIVAC® HEV



### Safe

Approximately a half a million doses of Equivac HeV have been administered to Australian horses, only 0.28% of these resulting in any reaction. Reported reactions to Equivac HeV are usually minor and are similar to reactions people report after receiving the flu shot, such as soreness or swelling at the injection site.



### Value

The cost of a Hendra vaccination is usually similar to the cost of a shoeing, and your horse only needs a booster once a year after the initial course, not every 8 weeks like shoeing!



### Effective

Protection with Equivac® HeV is guaranteed by Zoetis if your horse is vaccinated as instructed in the product leaflet.



### Peace of mind

A vaccinated horse means that vets can generally rule out Hendra virus infection if your horse becomes unwell, offering you the best treatments for your horse, without needing to wait for a negative Hendra virus test first. Vaccinated horses will not be quarantined in an outbreak. This could save you or your business a lot of money and inconvenience.

## VACCINATION IS SIMPLY THE BEST PROTECTION FOR YOUR HORSE AND YOUR FAMILY. TALK TO YOUR VET TODAY.

**REFERENCES** Field H, Jordan D, Edson D, Morris S, Melville D, Parry-Jones K, et al. (2015) *Spatiotemporal Aspects of Hendra Virus Infection in Pteropid Bats (Flying-Foxes) in Eastern Australia*. PLoS ONE. 10(12): e0144055. doi:10.1371/journal.pone.0144055. Map adapted from Richards, Hall and Parish 2012.