

22 February 2021

Dear Athlete,

**Re: Notification of EHV-1 outbreak in Valencia, required biosecurity measures and your eligibility to compete in FEI Events**

The FEI Veterinary Department has just been advised of an outbreak of Equine Herpes Virus (EHV-1 - neurological form) at the CES Valencia Spring Tour (ESP) and the following is important information for you following your participation at these shows.

We have been informed that some horses that participated at the event and left the venue on 14 February have since tested positive for EHV-1. As of 21 February 2021, 50 horses at the venue have developed a fever, which is a classic sign of the disease, and some are showing clinical signs of the neurological form of the virus. The on-venue horses are currently in isolation, and those that have already left the venue are under investigation and will be tested.

The number of horses affected indicates a major outbreak and it is important that you take appropriate measures to protect your own and other horses.

EHV-1 is an air-borne disease that can be transmitted up to five metres via coughing, but also through direct contact, via people and shared equipment. It can cause respiratory and neurological signs, abortion in pregnant mares and death of young foals. Please refer to the FEI's [Equine Herpes Virus factsheet](#) for more detailed information.

It is likely that the disease has been transferred to horses that have attended the venue since at least **1 February 2021**. In the interests of equine welfare, there are biosecurity measures you must implement for your horses that participated in the event and their in-contact horses at your home stable. These measures are to prevent the virus being transmitted at future events you attend.

Any horse travelling with a fever is not only a potential carrier and therefore likely to spread the virus to all other horses in the transport, but is at increased risk of developing shipping fever or the more serious neurological form of EHV. It is also a violation of EU transport legislation to travel with a sick horse, except for transport to veterinary facilities. Only symptom-free horses should travel and horses leaving Valencia must have their temperature taken prior to travel.

The following precautions must be implemented:

**1. Isolate your horses**

Horses that participated at Valencia as well as any others that have been in-contact with these horses must be isolated.

## **2. Take rectal temperatures**

Rectal temperatures of all of your horses should be taken and recorded twice daily. Horses that develop a fever should be examined by a veterinarian.

## **3. Laboratory testing for EHV-1**

Horses that participated at Valencia:

*Either*

Two samples taken using nasopharyngeal swabs must be analysed by PCR testing on day 7 and day 14. Day 0 is considered to be the day your horses left the venue at Valencia.

Both swabs must result in negative test results to EHV-1 in order to satisfy the requirements of the FEI Veterinary Department.

If either of the tests generate a positive result, the horse must remain in isolation and be re-tested. It is necessary to have two negative test results, taken at least seven days apart to fulfil the FEI Veterinary Department requirements.

*or*

The horse must be isolated for 21 days, rectal temperature must be taken and recorded during the isolation period and samples to be taken after day 21 using a nasopharyngeal swab to test for EHV-1 via PCR analysis. Day 0 is considered to be the day your horses left the venue at Valencia.

The swab must result in negative PCR test result to EHV-1. If the tests generates a positive result, the horse must remain in isolation for a further seven days and be re-tested.

Horses outside the Valencia show venue:

Your horse may have come into contact with other horses apart from those at the Valencia show venue, e.g. at your home stables or during your journey home. We recommend that you consult your usual veterinarian to advise you on biosecurity measures you should implement.

## **4. Release from Isolation**

Horses must only be released from isolation on the advice of your veterinarian.

## **5. Return to Competition**

In accordance with the FEI Veterinary Regulations, Article 1029.7, horses that have attended Valencia since **1 February 2021** are blocked in the FEI Database and will not be permitted to enter any FEI Events until they have fulfilled the testing requirements described above. Test results must be submitted via email

to the FEI Veterinary Department on [veterinary@fei.org](mailto:veterinary@fei.org) in order for the block in the FEI Database to be lifted.

We have informed the Organisers of the other Tours on the Iberian Peninsula of the situation and instructed them that they must not accept any horses that have been competing at Valencia.

We are grateful for your assistance in implementing these measures, which contribute significantly to preventing transmission of the disease. It is only by working together that we can keep our community of FEI horses, as well as local horses in your National Federation, healthy and disease free.

Please note that the FEI will not be responsible for any costs associated to the above requirements.

Please feel free to contact the Veterinary Department should you have any questions.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Göran', is positioned below the text 'Yours sincerely,'.

Göran Akerström, D.V.M.

FEI Veterinary Director