

Biosecurity during Pony Club Rallies

“Bio” means life, and “security” means protection. As a horse show competitor, following good biosecurity practices is one of the most important things you can do to prevent your horse from catching contagious diseases.

The goal with biosecurity is to reduce the chance that viruses, bacteria, or other germs will be carried to or from your horse property. Other horses, people, insects, trailers, and equipment can all carry germs and diseases from one place to another.

By making good biosecurity a habit on the road and at home, you'll help keep your horse healthy. Here are some simple steps you can take to protect them.

- **Prior to delivering your horse to show stall take measures to disinfect as many surfaces in the stall as possible using Lysol or similar disinfectant.**
- Remove used bedding before your horse is moved into the stall.
- **Minimize nose-to-nose contact between horses. Do not allow another horse to sniff your horse's nose “to get acquainted.”**
- **Resist the urge to pet other people's horses. Wash your hands or use a 62% ethyl alcohol hand gel before and after handling or riding other people's horses.**
- Do not share equipment for use with other people's horses. Alternatively, if any equipment is loaned, keep it away from your horses until it is cleaned with a detergent, rinsed, and properly disinfected.
- **Do not dunk hose end into water bucket when filling.**
- **Refrain from dunking wash sponges, bits or hands into communal water sources. Use a separate bucket of water specifically for that purpose, then discard the fouled water.**
- Avoid common-use areas such as tack stalls used to groom and tack multiple horses. If these common areas must be used, use cross ties instead on tying horses to a post, wall, or other nose-to-nose contact area.
- Halters, lead shanks, and face grooming towels should be used on one animal only and not shared between animals.
- Early detection of disease is paramount, especially contagious infectious diseases. Take horse's temperatures twice daily (morning and night) during the event and for two weeks after return to the stable.
- Quarantine horses when they return to the barn or training facility after an event. Clean and disinfect horse trailers before they're used by other horses.

These precautions do involve more work, more time, and more awareness. However, it will help reduce the risk of horses being exposed to multiple viral and bacterial diseases while on the road.