



Deworming: The Protocols

Different horses and different situations require different solutions to control parasites. There is no One-Size-Fits-All plan. Be sure to read our accompanying handout “**Deworming: The Principles**” and follow these guidelines:

- Anytime a fecal test result is positive a second fecal test is recommended 14-21 days after deworming with either Ivermectin or Moxidectin (Quest).
- Proper dosing of de-wormer is VERY IMPORTANT. Use a weight tape to determine your horse’s weight (or ask your veterinarian) to determine the proper dosage. Over-dosing is generally safe for healthy, adult horses but under-dosing leaves parasites in your horse, and encourages them to develop resistance to that drug. Make sure the horse’s mouth is completely empty before deworming and be sure that s(he) swallows ALL of the dewormer. If your horse spits out a portion of the dose, estimate how much and give more. With foals and weanlings, it is important to dose exactly according to weight. Over-dosing in these young horses can be dangerous.
- Fecal tests should be performed on all horses at least once per year, preferably during the summer (April-October). Tests may need to be run more often if recommended by a veterinarian.
- Not every horse in the herd will be affected by parasites in the same way. One horse can suffer from a heavy parasite infestation while a pasture-mate can be completely worm-free. Identifying which horses carry resistant parasites is a key point of management.

The following are sample protocols that you might use following the findings of a fecal test. Every horse and management situation is different. Please call our office to have a veterinarian advise you about which deworming protocol is right for you.

Deworming Protocol #1

This protocol refers to a horse pastured alone, or in a very small group, on adequate land and a fairly closed farm (a herd where new horses are seldom added) that have also had one of the following:

- a) Regardless of the time of the year, it has been 6 months or more since the last de-worming and they have a recent (within 4 weeks) negative fecal test.
- b) During the spring and summer months (April-October) it has been 4 months or more since the last de-worming and they have a recent negative fecal test.

TREATMENT: Deworm once per year (usually in October) with Ivermectin with Praziquantel (any brand is okay) or Quest Plus. Use the same de-wormer from year to year unless instructed otherwise by a veterinarian.

De-worming Protocol #2

This protocol is for farms that have a high population of horses or horses that frequently come on or off the property and also have had one of the following:

- a) Regardless of the time of the year, it has been at least 6 months since the last de-worming and the horse has a recent (less than 4 weeks) negative fecal test.
- b) During the spring and summer months (April-October) it has been at least 4 months since the last de-worming and the horse has a recent (less than 4 weeks) negative fecal test.

TREATMENT: Deworm twice per year (usually in April/May & October/November). Deworm in the spring with plain Ivermectin or Quest. If you use Ivermectin in the spring, use Ivermectin plus Praziquantel in the fall. If you use Quest in the spring, use Quest Plus in the fall. Continue using these same products year to year until directed otherwise by a veterinarian.

De-worming Protocol #3

This protocol is for farms with a very high population of horses or with many transient horses, or cases where a horse had a negative result on a fecal test but then had a positive fecal test 4 or 6 months later (4 months if during April-October, 6 months at any other time of the year.)

TREATMENT: Deworm in April, July & October. Use plain Ivermectin (any brand) or Quest in April and July and Ivermectin with Praziquantel or Quest Plus once in October. If you use Ivermectin in spring and summer, use Ivermectin plus Praziquantel in the fall. If you use Quest in the spring and summer, use Quest Plus in the fall. Continue using these same products year to year until directed otherwise by a veterinarian.

De-worming Protocol #4

This protocol is for horses that have had repeated positive fecal tests or other parasite-related health problems. A program customized to address the factors causing positive results will be customized by a veterinarian. Please call our office to speak to a veterinarian.