

Health and welfare information about your horse from Vetlexicon Equis.



©VetFolio LLC and Vetstream Ltd. Created and peer-reviewed by VetFolio LLC and Vetstream Ltd.

Anaplasma phagocytophilum infection

Also known as equine granulocytic anaplasmosis (EGA) or equine anaplasmosis. A relatively new disease first described in the United States in 1969, but now increasingly recognised both in the US and Europe.

What is *A. phagocytophilum* infection?

Anaplasmosis is an infection caused by the bacterium *A. phagocytophilum*.

A. phagocytophilum infection is tick-borne, spread by *Ixodes ricinus* (a sheep tick), and often occurs from spring to autumn due to increased tick activity at this time of year.

How do I know if my horse is infected?

Following an incubation period of 10 days, signs of infection may include loss of appetite, a fever, depression, reluctance to move, oedema (filled legs) and incoordination. The disease is self-limiting and clinical signs only last approximately 7-14 days.

Prompt diagnosis and treatment of *A. phagocytophilum* infection can speed recovery, so your horse develops these signs, call your vet as soon as possible.

How is the disease diagnosed?

The clinical signs associated with the disease are not specific; therefore clinical signs alone cannot be used to diagnose the condition. Infection with other pathogens such as *Borrelia burgdorferi*, *Babesia caballi*, *Theileria equi*, equine herpes virus, equine infectious anaemia virus and equine arteritis virus can all cause similar clinical signs.

Your vet will need to take some blood samples to test in the laboratory, as well as taking a skin biopsy and looking at any ticks that may be found on your horse.

Can my horse be treated?

Most horses recover spontaneously after infection, but antibiotics may be necessary; these may be given orally (by mouth) or intravenously (injected into a vein). Anti-inflammatories may also be prescribed to improve your horse's comfort and help with appetite.

Occasionally, horses develop this disease again after treatment has finished and may require treatment for a longer period of time with a different antibiotic. Once the infection has resolved, horses are often immune to this disease for a few years.

How can I prevent infection?

Tick control is the best method of prevention!

Ensure quick removal of attached ticks and avoid keeping your horse in areas with high tick burdens, such as bushes and overhanging tree branches, and maintain a short pasture.

In addition, the use of tick repellents that contain the drug permethrin can be useful.



SPRING PADDOCKS EQUINE
VETERINARY SURGEONS



page 3 / 3
vetlexicon

POWERED BY VETSTREAM
Copyright Vetstream 2021