

# Equine Piroplasmosis

## Treatment

### Who can treat a positive Equine Piroplasmosis (EP) horse?

Treatment must be performed by a United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) accredited veterinarian and must be performed under the observation of a state or federal animal health official.

### What drug is used for the treatment?

The drug used for treatment of *Theileria equi* (the causative agent of EP) is an antiprotozoal called imidocarb dipropionate.

### Are there any adverse effects of treatment with imidocarb?

Horses receiving this treatment may show signs of agitation, colic and diarrhea. Horses undergoing treatment should be carefully monitored for any complications.

### Who pays for the cost of treatment?

Treatment is at the owner's expense. Although you are responsible for paying the veterinary costs associated with treatment, all testing subsequent to treatment is paid for by the USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Services (APHIS) program if performed by a state or animal health official.

### How much does it cost to treat?

The total cost of veterinary charges to the owner is up to the individual veterinarian in charge of the treatment.

### What is the likelihood that my horse will respond to treatment?

To date, only 5% (10 out of 197) of horses treated for this disease have failed to respond after the first treatment. Of those, nine cleared the infection after the second treatment. Only one did not clear the infection after the second treatment.

Therefore, it is important to realize that your horse may only clear the infection after the second treatment. It is also important to realize that there is a small possibility that they may not be able to clear the infection at all. Treatment is not a guarantee of clearance of the infection.

### Have EP positive horses in California been treated?

In California, six horses have been treated by this protocol thus far and five have successfully cleared the infection. However, it is possible for a horse to have an infection with a strain of parasite which is resistant to treatment. This could be a possible cause for failure to clear the infection with treatment.

### I would like to treat my horse, now what?

If you decide to treat for this disease, notify the state or federal animal health official in charge of your case. Your horse will then be enrolled into the USDA APHIS treatment program.

### How long will my horse remain under quarantine should I choose to treat?

EP positive horses remain under quarantine from the time of confirmation until all criteria for release have been met, which includes negative test results on all available diagnostic tests. It is important to realize that, in some cases, it may take up to two or more years for your horse to be completely clear of the infection.

### How is my horse determined to be free of infection?

A horse that has undergone the treatment protocol needs to demonstrate the following:

- Three negative PCR tests 30 days apart (30, 60 and 90 days after treatment); and
- Proof of negative ELISA and CF tests after treatment.

### Animal Health and Food Safety Services Animal Health Branch

Headquarters - (916) 900-5002

Redding District - (530) 225-2140

Modesto District - (209) 491-9350

Tulare District - (559) 685-3500

Ontario District - (909) 947-4462

**USDA-APHIS** - (916) 854-3950 or (877) 741-3690

For more information, please go to the following:

[Equine Piroplasmosis Information Page](http://www.cdfa.ca.gov/ahfss/Animal_Health/EquinePiroplasmosis.html)

[www.cdfa.ca.gov/ahfss/Animal\\_Health/EquinePiroplasmosis.html](http://www.cdfa.ca.gov/ahfss/Animal_Health/EquinePiroplasmosis.html)