EquiStatus™ Tapeworm

Reduced effectiveness of anti-tapeworm anthelmintics has been detected in the UK

(Scientific publication in preparation)



A research-backed approach to tapeworm infection monitoring and anthelmintic efficacy

SCREEN → INTERPRET → INVESTIGATE → ACT → MONITOR

READ THE FULL GUIDELINES AT WWW.AUSTINDAVISBIOLOGICS.CO BEFORE USE

THE EQUISTATUS™ TAPEWORM PROCESS

SCREEN

1 Establish group tapeworm infection status

Saliva and blood antibody screening should be used first to establish the group's tapeworm infection profile. Testing should be performed a minimum of 3 months (if saliva testing) and 6 months (if blood testing) after the last anthelmintic treatment.

Faecal egg count (FEC) testing is unsuitable for initial screening because of a high likelihood of false negative results due to low and intermittent tapeworm egg shedding in most groups of horses.

INTERPRET

2 Determine if efficacy investigation is needed

Interpret the antibody results profile alongside the group's treatment, clinical and management history.

Low antibody results or low prevalence of infection supports the likelihood that current tapeworm control measures are effective.

High/Off-scale or persistently elevated antibody results in most or all horses, together with an indicative management and/or clinical history, suggest that further investigation into anthelmintic effectiveness is warranted.

Relevant history may include: repeated treatment with the same anthelmintic, clinical signs consistent with tapeworm infection or persistently high antibody levels despite treatment.

Free interpretation support available

Supporting vets, SQPs and their clients with evidence-based parasite control

Note: when considering small groups of horses (less than 5) or individuals, investigation must be supported by historic antibody test results and treatments. Consider repeating the EquiStatus™ Flotation test sequentially over a series of days to reduce the effects of inconsistent egg excretion when horse numbers are low.

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INVESTIGATE

3 Investigate efficacy using the EquiStatus™ Flotation test

For groups requiring further investigation, use EquiStatus™ Flotation testing (a validated FEC method for assessing tapeworm egg counts where efficacy is being assessed).

If few/no eggs are detected at Day 0 (prior to tapeworm treatment), do not resample at Day 14 but instead routinely monitor by antibody testing, combined with management improvements to reduce tapeworm transmission. If the antibody profile does not change, or worsens, over time, repeat EquiStatus™ Flotation testing.

If eggs are detected at Day 0 repeat the EquiStatus™ Flotation test at Day 14 after treatment.

Free advice available

No eggs detected in most horses at Day 14 is suggestive of treatment success. Note: some horses may have false negative results due to inconsistent egg shedding.

Detection of eggs in most horses at Day 14 is consistent with reduced effectiveness of treatment.

ACT

4 Respond to the findings

Use all available evidence to guide further tapeworm treatment decisions and management.

If treatment appears effective:

- Review and improve management to reduce tapeworm transmission.
- Minimise unnecessary or repeated treatments to protect anthelmintic effectiveness.

If reduced efficacy is identified:

- Immediately review and revise the parasite control plan under veterinary supervision and report to the Veterinary Medicines Directorate.
- Take immediate, significant steps to reduce tapeworm transmission, including improving paddock hygiene and, where appropriate, moving horses to clean grazing or stabling.
- Consider an alternative licensed treatment and investigate effectiveness.
- Avoid repeated use of an ineffective treatment.

MONITOR

5 Track infection status over time

Combine risk assessments (www.whatsyourwormrisk.com) with antibody testing to track infection status.

Regularly review and revise management practices where necessary to reduce tapeworm transmission.

Re-test antibody levels in saliva and blood at appropriate intervals following treatments.

Compare results over time to assess the response to treatment and management changes:

- If antibody levels are reducing, continue the current approach and keep monitoring.
- If antibody levels remain persistently elevated or increase despite management improvements and targeted treatments, investigate anthelmintic efficacy with EquiStatus™ Flotation testing.

ONLY INVESTIGATE WHERE EVIDENCE INDICATES

THE ROLE OF THE EQUISTATUS™ FLOTATION FEC TEST

NOT A REPLACEMENT FOR ANTIBODY SCREENING

Faecal methods have poor sensitivity for screening. Tapeworm eggs are shed intermittently from adult parasites and many infections comprise high proportions of non-egg shedding worms. A negative FEC cannot reliably rule out tapeworm infection.

A TARGETED INVESTIGATION TOOL

The EquiStatus™ Flotation FEC test has a role in anthelmintic efficacy investigation. The value comes from its use in appropriate groups after antibody screening indicates high infection levels are present in the group.

NO UNNECESSARY TESTING

A cost-effective, targeted approach to guide testing, treatment and management decisions, with efficacy testing focused on groups where it is most likely to provide useful results.