

Coggins handout

A coggins test is a blood test that is routinely performed on horses to screen for a disease called equine infectious anemia (EIA). EIA is a virus that is typically spread by large biting insects such as horseflies, but can also be spread by sharing needles between horses. Once a horse is infected with this disease, they can show symptoms such as weight loss, fever, low red blood cell count (anemia), weakness, etc. Sometimes infected horses will not show symptoms but can act as carriers of the virus, providing a source of infection to spread to other horses. Since there is no cure for this disease, and it can be fatal, our only defense is to test horses for the disease and either euthanize or quarantine the infected horses.

Since 1970, when Dr. Leroy Coggins first developed the test, the incidence of positive cases has decreased from 4% to less than 0.01%. More information can be found at:

http://www.aphis.usda.gov/vs/nahss/equine/eia/eia_info_sheet.pdf