

VETERINARY RECOMMENDATIONS

Traditionally most people vaccinate and deworm their horses every spring and usually deworm again in the fall. That gets the highest vaccination protection to occur during the part of the year when the highest risk for diseases occurs.

The combination vaccines work great and even though Montana and Wyoming are not always hotbeds for any disease, vaccinations are essential for good health. If you live anywhere near waterways, such as along the Yellowstone or any other river, your horses are at higher risk of disease. The moisture and higher mosquito and tick populations are the source of many problems.

Tetanus is a major concern with horses. Punctures of any kind can push the tetanus bacteria into their system and the result can be deadly. Every horse should be protected with the tetanus vaccine and when punctures do occur your veterinarian may want to boost the immunity with another tetanus vaccination.

You may also want to think about adding the rabies vaccine to your vaccination protocol. It is one of the cheaper vaccines but many do not use it. Every year there are quarantined counties in Montana and Wyoming because rabies was found in some type of animal. The skunk is a common carrier and sounds pretty non-threatening to the horse, but a rabid skunk loses all his natural fears and may attack any animal.

The biggest threat is the bat. You would never know if a rabid bat bit your horse until you find out your horse has rabies. Bats, too, become aggressive when they are rabid and may bite a horse. Over the years, even people in Montana have died from rabies as a result from being bitten by rabid bats when they were asleep outside.

Protect your horses every year with the rabies vaccination. It just makes good sense.