

# Hendra Virus

## Important Community Information

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Hendra virus is a very rare cause of disease in horses and humans and is not related to Equine Influenza.

Scientists believe Hendra virus is normally a virus of bats (flying foxes, fruit bats).

The few cases of Hendra virus infection in humans have been the result of very close contact with horses infected with the virus.

### Reduce the Risk – Biosecurity Considerations

Hendra virus is not highly infectious. The spread of infection between horses and people can be minimised by good on-farm biosecurity measures including:

- ensuring high levels of personal hygiene, including washing hands after and between handling horses
- ensuring all equipment used with horses is clean before and between different horses
- wearing appropriate clothing or gloves to reduce contact with saliva and other discharges from sick horses
- keeping unwashed hands away from your mouth, nose or eyes.

### Advice to Horse Owners

Managing Hendra virus does not involve movement restrictions for the general horse population. Movement is only restricted for properties under quarantine for Hendra virus.

Horse movements to events and other activities, including mixing of horses, can continue, however, sound biosecurity measures as outlined above should be practiced.

People working with horses, such as such as farriers, equine dentists and chiropractors, strappers, vets, or feed delivery merchants should also follow sound biosecurity procedures.

Contact your local veterinarian if you notice changes in the health of your horses or suspect they may be infected with Hendra virus.

Signs that may suggest your horse is infected with Hendra virus include:

- respiratory signs, including frothy nasal discharge and elevated body temperature > 40 °C
- neurological changes, including abnormal muscle twitching, weakness and loss of balance.

### Find out More

Contact the Queensland Health Hotline on **13 Health (432584)** if you have concerns about possible exposure of people to Hendra virus.

More information is available at [www.dpi.qld.gov.au](http://www.dpi.qld.gov.au) or by calling **13 25 23**.

