Equine Motor Neuron Disease (EMND)

What is equine motor neuron disease (EMND)?
• Typically occurs in older horses that have been vitamin E deficient for >18 months
• Affects lower motor neurons, interfering with neurological input into muscles
• Similar to amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS or Lou Gehrig’s disease) in humans
• Risk appears to peak at 16 years of age, and not all horses deficient in vitamin E for extended periods will develop the disease.

What you can do to keep your horse healthy:
• Ensuring that horses receive adequate vitamin E through access to pasture or closely monitored vitamin E supplementation reduces the risk of developing EMND.

Signs
Muscle atrophy
Weakness
Weight loss

Transmission
Autosomal dominant inheritance

Treatment
vitamin E supplementation

*If your horse needs medical care, contact the Large Animal Clinic at (530) 752-1393.