

# Rhodococcus equi



## What is *Rhodococcus equi*?

- Bacterium that lives in the soil and can cause pneumonia in young foals.
- Infection progresses slowly and foals often do not begin to show clinical signs until the disease has become severe.
- Can infect immunocompromised humans and cause lung infections.
- Many infected foals recover, but those that are severely affected may not survive.

## What you can do to keep your horse healthy:

- There are no available vaccines, so farms may perform regular screening by ultrasound to detect foals in the early stages of disease.
- Limit overcrowding of foals, and ensuring that they are housed in well-ventilated areas where dust is minimized. Dirt paddocks should be avoided.
- Foals that appear ill should be removed from group settings and their manure managed appropriately.

### Signs

Fever  
Labored breathing  
Cough  
Depression  
Rattling sound in  
windpipe

### Transmission

Inhalation of airborne  
bacteria  
Ingestion of  
contaminated soil

### Treatment

Antibiotics  
Maintain foals in low  
stress, climate-controlled  
environments with good  
ventilation

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



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