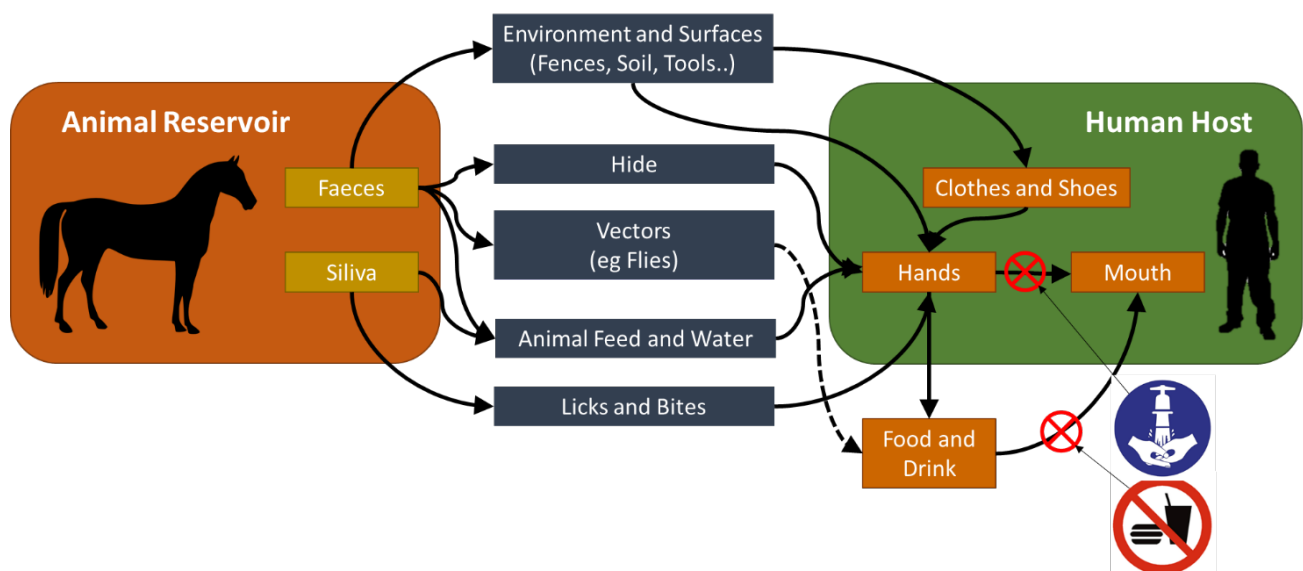




Zoonosis (Animal to Human Infection) Fact Sheet

What are Zoonoses

A zoonosis is an infectious disease caused by a pathogen (such as a bacterium, virus, parasite, or prion) that has been transmitted from an animal to a human. These infectious pathogens may be passed through several transmission routes as shown in the figure below.



Horses can be a source of the following diseases in humans:

- **Giardiasis** is a diarrhoeal disease caused by a parasite. The disease is spread via the ingestion of contaminated water or food, or by direct contact with infected animals or humans
- **Ringworm** is a fungal skin disease of humans and other animals. It causes a characteristic ring-like red rash on the skin, which is not usually serious
- **Streptococcus zooepidemicus** is a bacterium that infects horses. It is a very rare human disease but can be acquired by direct contact with infected animals
- **Salmonella** bacteria can cause gastrointestinal illness in humans through contact with contaminated feed, water, or rodents
- **Cryptosporidiosis** is a parasitic infection spreads via contaminated water or surfaces and leads to diarrhoeal illness in humans
- **Leptospirosis** bacteria, often carried in rodent urine, can infect humans through contaminated stable environments or water

There are other zoonoses that can be transmitted from horses to humans but these rarely occur. For a full list of zoonoses see <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/list-of-zoonotic-diseases/list-of-zoonotic-diseases#selected-zoonotic-diseases-exotic-to-the-uk>

What are my Responsibilities?

Zoonoses are subject to the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations (COSHH). Riding Schools, Livery Yards and Riding Establishments are required to:

- Undertake a risk assessment to determine the risks to health for both employees and clients
- Introduce and maintain controls (including Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and training) that prevent or control exposure to zoonoses
- Have procedures for reporting incidents for suspected zoonotic infections

What Measures can be used to Prevent or Control Zoonoses?

Typical controls measures that you may wish to consider including within your Yards rules and/or bio-security plan are given below.

Important control points are indicated by an X symbol in the figure above. To reduce the risk of ingesting pathogens, you should:

- Promote hand hygiene. Hand washing facilities should be provided, and staff and client encouraged to use them. Hand sanitisers and disinfectant wipes can be used but these are not a substitute for hand washing
- Ensure that human food consumption does not occur around the horses and only after appropriate hand hygiene
- Use gloves for mucking out, masks for dusty environments and protective clothing for veterinary procedures
- Ensure that boots, outerwear and equipment used in stables is not be worn in staff/client communal areas

There are other measures that can be taken that will limit routes of transmission:

- Ensure that personal belongings are stored in a safe area that is away from the horses to prevent contamination
- Provide clear instructions on what areas are accessible or not accessible to staff and clients (animal feed prep areas, storage areas, muck heap etc)
- Apply horse hygiene arrangements, with horses being kept clean, and manure and soiled bedding removed regularly. This will also discourage biting insects. Where necessary, implement rodent control measures
- Institute a schedule of cleaning and disinfecting of stable areas (quarterly, six-monthly, etc)

It is important that you provide appropriate educational material for staff and clients so that they understand the Yard rules and appreciate why these rules are in place. Staff and clients

should be briefed on 'stable hygiene' (staff as part of their induction training) to improve their awareness of the risks associated with pathogens and the steps to take to prevent infection. You should prominently display 'hand washing' and 'no eating or drinking' signs.