

# EQUINE RINGWORM BIOSECURITY PROTOCOL

Controlling spread in equine facilities



**Trichophyton is the Fungi that causes Ringworm**



Ringworm, despite its name, is a fungal infection that affects the skin and hair of horses. It is highly contagious and can spread rapidly through an equine facility. Implementing a strict biosecurity protocol is crucial to contain the infection and prevent future outbreaks. This document outlines the key steps to take when ringworm is identified in your equine facility.

## 1. Immediate Isolation

The **first** and **most important** step is to isolate any horse suspected or confirmed to have ringworm. This prevents further spread of the fungal spores.

- **Separate:** Move infected horse(s) to a designated isolation area, ideally a separate stable or paddock.
- **Limit Contact:** Ensure no direct contact between infected and healthy horses.
- **No Shared Equipment:** Do not share tack, grooming tools, blankets, or buckets between infected and healthy horses.

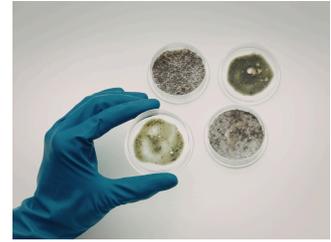
The isolation area should be physically separated from the rest of the facility and clearly marked. It should allow for proper ventilation and sunlight exposure. Limit human traffic to the isolation area to only essential personnel, and ensure they follow strict biosecurity measures (see section 3).



## 2. Thorough Cleaning and Disinfection

Ringworm spores can survive in the environment for extended periods. Thorough cleaning and disinfection are essential to eliminate the fungus.

**EBG disinfectant has been tested at the Irish Equine Centre against Trichophyton, which is the fungi that causes Ringworm, and the bespoke testing has been carried out in clean and dirty conditions down to a 5 minute contact time.**



- **Remove Organic Matter:** Scrape away all bedding, manure, and loose hair from stables, trailers, and grooming areas.
- **Wash:** Scrub all surfaces with soap and water to remove dirt and debris.
- **Disinfect:** Use Equine Bio Genie disinfectant. Our disinfectant has been specifically tested to kill ringworm.
- **Do not Rinse:** EBG disinfectant (unlike commonly used disinfectants) is a leave in place product. It is safe to leave as it degrades to water and oxygen.
- **Sunlight:** Where possible, expose cleaned and disinfected surfaces to direct sunlight, as UV radiation helps kill fungal spores.

Pay particular attention to areas where infected horses have been in contact, including stables, fences, grooming areas, and transport. Disinfect all equipment used on infected horses, including tack, grooming tools, blankets, and buckets. Dispose of bedding and other contaminated materials properly, ideally by burning or burying them (check local regulations). Repeat the cleaning and disinfection process regularly, especially during the initial stages of the outbreak.

### Tips:

**1)** Remember to disinfect your horse box. Take muck out and rinse with water, then apply EBG disinfectant and leave it in place to dry.



**2)** Disinfect all fencing if the infected horse was turned out. Remember that ringworm can live in wood indefinitely.

**3)** Contact EBG if you require their Service team to come and disinfect your facility.

### 3. How regularly should I Disinfect?

- **DAILY** - especially while the lesions are active. We recommend daily for at least the first 7 days. Thereafter 1-2 times per week for another 2-3 weeks. Ringworm spores are stubborn and can linger even after skin looks healed.
- If Daily disinfection is not practical then try to disinfect 2-3 times per week (minimum).
- After the first few weeks of disinfecting move to disinfecting **once a fortnight**.
- Aiming for **once a month** for maintenance.

### 4. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Wearing appropriate PPE minimizes the risk of spreading ringworm spores to yourself and other horses.

- **Gloves:** Wear disposable gloves when handling infected horses or contaminated equipment.
- **Protective Clothing:** Wear coveralls or other protective clothing that can be easily laundered or disposed of.
- **Footwear:** Wear boots that can be disinfected. Dedicate a pair of boots specifically for the isolation area.
- **Hand Hygiene:** Wash hands thoroughly with soap and water after any contact with infected horses or potentially contaminated materials.

Change gloves between handling different horses. Wash protective clothing separately from other laundry. Disinfect boots after each use in the isolation area. Avoid touching your face or hair while working with infected horses or contaminated materials. Educate all staff members on the importance of PPE and proper hygiene practices.

**Tip:**

EBG multi purpose disinfectant spray is easy to use and can be safely sprayed on your hands, clothing and all horse equipment.



## 5. Monitoring and Treatment

Regular monitoring of all horses is essential to detect new infections early. Work closely with your veterinarian to develop a treatment plan for infected horses.

- **Daily Observation:** Check all horses daily for signs of ringworm, including circular lesions, hair loss, and scaling skin.
- **Treatment protocol step 1: Use EBG disinfectant as a fungal wash:** Consult EBG for the fungal wash dilution rate. Wash your horse on a daily basis for 5 days. Do not wash off, leave your horse to dry in the product.
- **Treatment protocol step 2: Use EBG DERMOL CREAM:** apply to the affected areas twice a day.
- **Monitor Progress:** Monitor treated horses regularly to assess their response to treatment. Continue treatment until all lesions have resolved and hair regrowth is evident.

Remember, ringworm can sometimes present with subtle signs, so careful observation is crucial. Be patient and persistent with treatment, as ringworm can be difficult to eradicate. Continue biosecurity measures throughout the treatment period to prevent reinfection or spread to other horses.

### Tips:

- 1) Clip the affected areas. As you are washing the horse head to toe it may be easier to have a clipped horse so they dry quicker. Make sure to disinfect the clippers.
- 2) If their coats look dull when the ringworm is cleared you can use a nourishing coat condition to bring back their shine!

## 6. Prevention

Implementing preventative measures can help reduce the risk of ringworm outbreaks in your facility.

- **Quarantine New Arrivals:** Quarantine new horses for 2-3 weeks before introducing them to the existing herd.
  - **Avoid Overcrowding:** Maintain appropriate stocking densities to reduce stress and improve ventilation.
  - **Good Hygiene:** Practice good hygiene, including regular cleaning and disinfection of stalls and equipment.
  - **Minimize Sharing:** Avoid sharing tack and grooming tools between horses.
  - **Boost Immunity:** Ensure horses are healthy and well-nourished to support their immune systems.
- New horses can be carriers of ringworm even if they show no clinical signs. Quarantine allows you to observe them for any signs of infection before they come into contact with other horses. Stress can weaken the immune system, making horses more susceptible to ringworm. A strong immune system helps horses resist infection and recover more quickly. Regularly clean and disinfect common areas and equipment to minimize the presence of fungal spores.



## Summary

Ringworm is a contagious fungal infection that requires a comprehensive biosecurity approach. Immediate isolation, thorough cleaning and disinfection, proper PPE, diligent monitoring, and preventative measures are all essential components of a successful ringworm control program. By implementing these strategies, you can protect your horses and maintain a healthy equine facility.

## For help and advice

Contact the EBG Team - [www.equine-bio-genie.co.uk](http://www.equine-bio-genie.co.uk)

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