

# EXOTIC

## Contagious equine metritis

### Fact sheet

July 2023

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#### Introductory statement

Contagious equine metritis (CEM) is not present in Australia. It is a sexually transmitted disease of horses that causes endometritis (inflammation of the lining of the uterus) and temporary infertility in mares. It is caused by infection with the bacterium *Taylorella equigenitalis*, strains of which vary in pathogenicity.

CEM is sometimes associated with cervicitis, vaginitis and rarely, abortion. Both sexes can be inapparent carriers of the bacteria.

CEM can be spread mechanically by contact with infectious discharges and contaminated fomites. All breeds of horses are susceptible, and donkeys can be infected experimentally.

If you suspect a case of CEM you should immediately call the **Emergency Animal Disease Hotline (1800 675 888)**.

#### References and other information

The latest information on CEM is available from the World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH) website: [www.woah.org/fileadmin/Home/eng/Health\\_standards/tahm/3.06.02\\_CEM.pdf](http://www.woah.org/fileadmin/Home/eng/Health_standards/tahm/3.06.02_CEM.pdf)

WOAH detection, reporting and control measures are located at:

[www.woah.org/fileadmin/Home/eng/Health\\_standards/tahc/current/chapitre\\_cem.pdf](http://www.woah.org/fileadmin/Home/eng/Health_standards/tahc/current/chapitre_cem.pdf)

The Response Policy Brief (version 3.6, 2018) contains information on the control and eradication of CEM and other diseases not covered by full AUSVETPLAN disease strategies. It is available as part of the AUSVETPLAN series. Wildlife considerations as part of response are addressed in the WARS AUSVETPLAN. Both can be found at: <https://animalhealthaustralia.com.au/ausvetplan>

Information available on distribution and abundance of feral horses and donkeys in Australia can be accessed through “Significant invasive species (vertebrate pests)” (2008)

[https://pestsmart.org.au/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2020/06/NLWRA\\_Invasive\\_Animals\\_Booklet.pdf](https://pestsmart.org.au/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2020/06/NLWRA_Invasive_Animals_Booklet.pdf).

#### Acknowledgements

This sheet summarises information available in the WARS AUSVETPLAN. We are grateful to those who have had input into this plan and Animal Health Australia who maintain the plan. The full AUSVETPLAN is available at: <https://animalhealthaustralia.com.au/ausvetplan>

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## To provide feedback on fact sheets

Wildlife Health Australia welcomes your feedback on fact sheets. Please email [admin@wildlifehealthaustralia.com.au](mailto:admin@wildlifehealthaustralia.com.au). We would also like to hear from you if you have a particular area of expertise and are interested in creating or updating a WHA fact sheet. A small amount of funding is available to facilitate this.

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