BEVA

Client Information Leaflet

Keep this leaflet safe, as you may need to refer to it again. Please ask your vet if you have any further questions. This medicine has been prescribed for your horse ONLY. Do not take it yourself or give it to another person or any other animal; it may harm them even if their symptoms appear to be the same and could result in inadvertent contravention of Horse Passport legislation.

While BEVA have made every effort in preparing this information leaflet, the contents and any statements are made in good faith purely for general guidance and cannot be regarded as substitute for professional advice. The publishers, contributors and BEVA do not take responsibility for the information provided on this leaflet and hence do not accept any liability for loss or expense incurred (by you or persons that you disseminate the materials to) as a result of relying on content in this leaflet. To this end, you are advised to consult your vet and seek his/her professional advice before taking any steps set out in this leaflet. If you are a vet, you must not rely on the contents in this leaflet without independently verifying the correctness and veracity of the contents.

Date Published/Revised: 03.03.22

GnRH Vaccine

This medicine has been given or is intended to be given to your horse or donkey. The medicine is a gonadotropin releasing hormone (GnRH) vaccine that is not registered for use in horses or donkeys but is registered in other animal species, and it is being used under the prescribing cascade.

What is GnRH vaccine? A GnRH vaccine is used to immunise male and female equines against their own reproductive hormone GnRH in order to inhibit their normal reproductive function and behaviour.

Why has my horse/donkey been administered GnRH vaccine? Your horse/donkey will have received a GnRH vaccine to suppress behaviours associated with the oestrus cycle in mares/jennys, or aggressive and testosterone driven reproductive behaviours in stallions/jacks.

Vaccination in equines results in the formation of antibodies against the body's own hormone GnRH. Antibodies against GnRH result in the hormone not being able to act on its target site in the pituitary resulting in a subsequent reduction of the hormones: Luteinising Hormone (LH) and Follicle Stimulating Hormone (FSH).

In female equines these hormones act on the ovaries, to stimulate follicular activity and drive the reproductive (oestrus) cycle. A reduction in these hormones will reduce ovarian activity and hence reduce the amount of progesterone and oestrogens produced by the ovaries and may stop them 'cycling', with a resultant behavioural change. This may be termed 'Immuno-sterilisation'.

In male equines these hormones act on the testicles, to stimulate activity. A reduction in these hormones will reduce testicular activity and hence reduce the amount of testosterone and oestrogens produced by the testicles, with a resultant behavioural change. This may also be known as 'chemical castration'.

Why has my horse been administered an unlicensed GnRH vaccine? There is no licensed GnRH vaccine for equines in the United Kingdom (UK). Therefore a GnRH vaccine licensed for pigs in the UK is used under the prescribing cascade.

How should I store and handle GnRH vaccine? Normally the veterinary surgeon will be handling and administering the vaccine and will have responsibility for storing the vaccine. For safety, all medicines should be kept out of the reach and sight of children. The vaccine should be refrigerated between 2 and 8 degrees centigrade. Once broached the container may be returned to the refrigerator. The product must not be administered by pregnant women or those who may be pregnant.

What should I do if I run out of GnRH vaccine? Normally the veterinary surgeon will be administering the vaccine and will have responsibility for storing the vaccine. Should the vaccine be unavailable after treatment has commenced, contact your veterinarian.

What should I do if I accidentally overdose my horse? Normally the veterinary surgeon will be administering the vaccine. If your horse/donkey receives an overdose, contact your veterinarian.

What should I do if I miss a dose? If a dose of vaccine is missed immunity may be reduced and anti-bodies against GnRH may reduce. You should discussed missed doses with your veterinarian.

If my horse/donkey is better what should I do with the remaining medicine? Normally the veterinary surgeon will be administering the vaccine. The veterinary surgeon may use their judgement to give your horse/donkey a second

The prescribing cascade: This medicine is authorised for use in human patients or other animal species and is used by vets under the 'prescribing cascade'. Your vet can explain this in further detail and explain why they are prescribing this drug for your horse. If you do not agree to the use of this medicine in your horse you should discuss this before administration.

vaccination of a primary course, or subsequent 'booster' vaccinations to maintain the effect of the vaccine. You should contact your veterinary surgeon before re-vaccination of your horse/donkey. Your veterinarian will comply with the product data sheet with regard to disposal of unused product.

If my horse/donkey is not improving what should I do?
Contact your veterinary surgeon who will review whether this is the correct medication for your horse/donkey

Can my horse/donkey get a GnRH vaccine along with other medications? Tell your veterinarian if you are giving your horse any other medications.

What do I need to record in my horse or donkey's passport?
All vaccines, including GnRH vaccines must be recorded in the horse's passport. This medicine can be used in horses without the need to permanently exclude them from the human food chain. There are no residue concerns with GnRH vaccination, however you should maintain a record of its use, if your horse's passport has not been signed to permanently exclude it from the food chain.

What are the possible side effects of GnRH vaccination in my horse/donkey?
GnRH vaccine should not be used in male or female equines intended for breeding, the effect of vaccination may be long lasting and may result in permanent infertility. Mares/jennys vaccinated against GnRH may also demonstrate oestrus behaviour after vaccination and ovarian inactivation. Mares which may be pregnant and are to remain pregnant should not be administered a GnRH vaccine.

Local injection site reactions are very common. The degree of reaction experienced is variable but often significant. The majority of horses vaccinated into the neck develop pyrexia after initial vaccination and approximately 30% develop painful and swollen necks. On repeat injections, approximately 80% of horses react with painful, swollen and stiff necks, necessitating concurrent anti-inflammatory medication at the time of vaccination. Severe reactions that require further treatment can occur but are uncommon. Anaphylactoid type reactions resulting in sudden collapse have been observed rarely in horses.

There may be sporting-regulations relating to the use of a GnRH vaccine which should be considered, any such implications should be discussed with your veterinary surgeon and/or the regulatory body of your sport, before any GnRH vaccine is administered.

What should I do if a person accidentally takes or has a needle stick injury with this medicine? One should refer to the product data sheet for guidance on administration and operator warnings. Accidental self-injection may produce similar effects in people to those seen in pigs. These may include a temporary reduction in sexual hormones and reproductive functions in both men and women and an adverse effect on pregnancy. The risk of these effects occurring is greater after a second or subsequent accidental injection than after a first injection. Special care should be taken to avoid accidental self-injection and needle stick injury when administering the product. In case of eye contact, rinse immediately with copious amounts of water and consult your doctor. In case of skin contact, wash immediately with soap and water and consult your doctor.

Accidental injection/self-injection may result in severe pain and swelling, particularly if injected into a joint or finger, and in rare cases could result in the loss of the affected finger if prompt medical attention is not given. In the event of accidental self-injection, wash the injury thoroughly with clean running water. Seek medical advice immediately and take the package leaflet with you, which contains advice for the doctor. If pain persists for more than 12 hours after medical examination, seek medical advice again. Do not administer the product if you have self-injected previously.