

Fact Sheet

Artificial Insemination

What is Artificial Insemination (AI)

Artificial insemination has made it possible for owners to get access to the best genetic material from around the world. Artificial insemination is the process of collecting semen from the stallion and manually placing it in the uterus of the mare.

What are the benefits to AI?

- Reduced risk of disease transmission
- Reduced risk of injury to mare, stallion and personnel involved compared to natural cover
- Greater monitoring of semen quality
- Increased number of mares bred as each ejaculate can be split into multiple doses
- Ability to breed mares with stallions all over the world without the need to travel the mare
- Decreased physical demand on the stallion
- Allows stallions to continue competing without the need for a break for the breeding season
- Use of semen from deceased stallions



Semen for AI can be either fresh, chilled or frozen!

Fresh semen

Fresh semen comes straight from the stallion and must be implanted into the mare immediately. As a result this is usually done with the mare and the stallion in the same location.

Fresh semen has the highest conception rates in normal mares.



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Chilled semen

Chilled semen is the next best option, conception wise. It is mixed with an extender and antibiotics to increase its lifespan, then chilled.

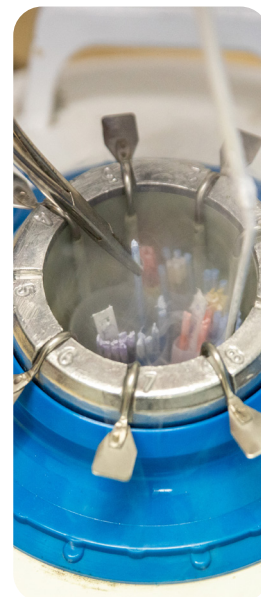
In this state it can last for 2-3 days. Mares are ideally inseminated with chilled semen 12-24 hours prior to ovulating.



Frozen semen

Frozen semen is usually stored and transported in liquid nitrogen and thawed immediately prior to insemination. Mares must be inseminated within 6-8 hours of ovulation, meaning that close monitoring of their follicles is required to get the best conception rates.

Frozen semen has slightly lower fertility rates as some of the sperm can lose viability in the freezing-thawing process, however advances in preservatives and veterinary input mean that they are only marginally less.

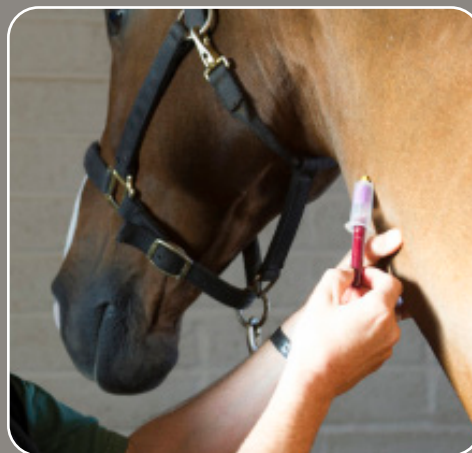


Pre-breeding health tests

Prior to commencing the AI programme all mares should have a negative clitoral swab test for sexually transmitted diseases, such as Contagious Equine Metritis (CEM), and blood sample to test for EVA.

If your mare doesn't show obvious signs of oestrus, then a prior examination at home, by your vet and a prostaglandin injection and/or course of Regumate, to bring her into season, may be required.

A uterine swab is often taken as early as possible when the mare is in oestrus and is submitted for laboratory examination for signs of infection which could interfere with conception.



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This factsheet was created by the VetPartners Equine Team, with assistance from our Marketing Team and Veterinary Regulatory Advisors.

For further information, please contact your local VetPartners Equine Veterinary Practice on:

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