



## AAEP Members Rank Equine Research Needs

by: Edited Press Release

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Laminitis and colic were the top two equine conditions in need of more research, according to nearly 600 members of the American Association of Equine Practitioners (AAEP) who recently responded to a survey conducted by the AAEP Foundation. The Foundation coordinates equine research and supports student scholarships. This is the second member survey conducted to aid the group in prioritizing areas of study in equine health.

The average AAEP-member veterinarian responding to the survey was a U.S. resident in general practice who has been in practice for more than 20 years.

Respondents were asked to rank the most pressing equine healthcare problem(s) they faced and wished they had answers for by body systems in the order of importance for research needs. They ranked the musculoskeletal system highest from the choices they received, with 85% of respondents ranking this system as being either extremely important or important.

The body systems that followed in order of importance under the same criteria were gastrointestinal (82%), respiratory (74%), endocrine (67%), and nervous (62%).

Specific conditions they cited included:

- Laminitis 63%
- Colic 52%
- Arthritis 49%
- Tendon injuries 44%
- Navicular disease 36%
- Racing injuries 34%
- Suspensory ligament injuries 32%
- Foot problems 31%
- Osteochondritis dissecans (OCD) 28%
- Rhinopneumonitis (herpesvirus) 26%
- Recurrent lower airway disease 24%
- Foal pneumonia 23%

When it comes to technologies needing more research, respondents indicated that horse-side laboratory tests are a high need (71%), followed by regenerative medicine (64%), imaging (53%), genetic testing (39%), and vaccines (39%).

When asked where they get new information on recent research, the majority of members (83%) said they learned from the AAEP Convention, followed by journals, including *The Horse* (55%). E-mail listservs were also cited as useful resources.

"The 2009 AAEP Membership Equine Research Study is a valuable tool in determining where the industry should direct support for equine research in the future," said Wayne McIlwraith, BVSc, FRCVS, PhD, Dipl. ACVS, Dipl. ECVS, chair of the AAEP Foundation. "With this updated study, the industry is able to identify the areas of equine research important to veterinarians, thus enhancing the industry's ability to make important decisions as to where time and resources should be directed to help horses through research."

[Learn more about the AAEP Foundation.](#)



**Readers are cautioned to seek the advice of a qualified veterinarian  
before proceeding with any diagnosis, treatment, or therapy.**

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