



Equine Influenza

Why in News?

After detecting **equine influenza in horses and mules** in two villages of **Rudraprayag**, the Uttarakhand government has begun taking steps to contain its spread ahead of the [Char Dham Yatra](#).

Key Points

- **Equine Influenza:** Commonly known as "horse flu," is a **fast-spreading respiratory illness** affecting horses.
 - The disease is primarily **caused by two subtypes of the influenza A virus** — H3N8 and H7N7.
 - The virus spreads rapidly through **direct contact with infected animals or contaminated environments**.
 - While equine influenza is rarely fatal, it **can lead to serious complications**, particularly in young foals, including secondary bacterial infections and prolonged respiratory issues.
- **Government Response and Action Plan:**
 - The Uttarakhand government has initiated **containment measures to prevent the disease from spreading** during the pilgrimage season.
 - The **State Animal Husbandry Minister chaired a review meeting** to assess the situation and guide the response.
 - The minister directed officials to prioritise the **screening of all horses and mules** before allowing their participation in the yatra.
 - Horses and mules entering Uttarakhand from other states must **carry a valid health certificate and a negative equine influenza test report**.
- **Char Dham Yatra Schedule 2025:**
 - The Char Dham Yatra is set to begin with the opening of [Yamunotri](#) and [Gangotri Dhams](#) on 30th April 2025.
 - [Kedarnath Dham](#) will open on 2nd May followed by [Badrinath Dham](#) on 4th May.

Char Dham Yatra



- **Yamunotri Dham:**
 - **Location:** Uttarkashi district.

- **Dedicated to:** Goddess Yamuna.
- River Yamuna is the **second-most sacred river in India** after River Ganga.
- **Gangotri Dham:**
 - **Location:** Uttarkashi district.
 - **Dedicated to:** Goddess Ganga.
 - Considered the **most sacred of all Indian rivers.**
- **Kedarnath Dham:**
 - **Location:** Rudraprayag district.
 - **Dedicated to:** Lord Shiva.
 - Situated on the bank of the **Mandakini River.**
 - One of the **12 Jyotirlingas (divine representations of Lord Shiva) in India.**
- **Badrinath Dham:**
 - **Location:** Chamoli district.
 - Home to the sacred **Badrinarayan Temple.**
 - **Dedicated to:** Lord Vishnu.
 - One of the **holy shrines for Vaishnavites.**

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