



Equine Emergencies: Be Prepared!



Normal Physical Exam Parameters (Adult Horse):

Rectal temp: 99–101.5° F

Heart rate: 24–44 beats/min. (influenced by anxiety/exercise)

Respiratory rate: 8–18 breaths/min. (influenced by anxiety/exercise/outside temp)

Emergency Plan

- ✓ Veterinarian's phone number posted in barn
- ✓ Know address if horse is stabled
- ✓ First aid kit ready and accessible
- ✓ Transportation availability plan
- ✓ Financial considerations
- ✓ Cell phone reception in the barn?

When Emergencies Do Occur

Stay safe. Stay calm. Call your veterinarian: Identify yourself and your horse, give your location, describe what is happening, inform him/her of any special concerns (medical history, allergies, current medications, behavior issues). If possible, call your veterinarian while you are near your horse; he/she will likely have more questions for you.

Common Equine Emergencies: Possible Symptoms and What to Do

Colic

- General term for abdominal pain
- Symptoms: inappetance, pawing, stretching out (can look like posturing to urinate), kicking at abdomen, lying down, rolling, decreased manure production, reduced gut sounds, increased heart/respiratory rate
- What to do: remove food (water OK), call veterinarian, allow horse to rest if quiet, walk horse if actively colicing and can be done safely for 15–30 mins. and allow to rest

Choke

- Obstruction of esophagus, horse cannot swallow feed/saliva
- Often will resolve on its own in less than 1 hr.
- Symptoms: green discharge from both nostrils, extending neck, strong cough, anxiety
- What to do: remove feed AND water, attempt to calm horse, massage left side of neck, call veterinarian

Eye Injuries

- Even simple injuries can develop into serious problems; do not hesitate to call veterinarian if you have concerns about your horse's eyes.

Sudden Severe Lameness

- Hoof abscess is most common.
- What to do: Keep horse calm and confined. Call your veterinarian.

Lacerations and Wounds

- Keep tetanus vaccine updated (within last 6 mos. for laceration).
- The following require immediate veterinary attention: excessive bleeding, puncture wounds, deep lacerations, wounds near joints, wounds that involve tendons, foreign body penetration.
- What to do:
 - **If excessive bleeding occurs**, apply pressure bandage. Leave bandage on until veterinarian arrives. Add more layers to bandage if blood seeps through the layers.
 - **If foreign body is suspected**, such as nail in foot, leave in place if possible so veterinarian can determine what structures are involved. If must remove, mark body with permanent marker and depth of foreign body.

Grain Overload

- Horse got into feed room and ate more than his share of grain.
- What to do: Remove feed and water and call your veterinarian!

24/7 Equine
Emergency:
360.568.3111



Ambulatory and In-Hospital Care Available

11308 92nd St SE, Snohomish