First Aid For Horses

EQUINE FIRST AID

Definitions:

Emergency: *An unexpected occurrence leading to a sudden need for action.*

First Aid: *Immediate help given in the case of injury or sudden illness given by a lay person before the arrival of a veterinarian.*

THE NORMAL HORSE

If you know what is normal for your horse, it will make it much easier to assess what is abnormal should an emergency arise. I believe that every horse owner should take the time to observe his or her horse over a period of time to find out what normal behavior is for that animal. Evaluation of your animal should include the following:

Behavior:

- How does your horse act normally?
- How often does he roll?
- How often does he vocalize?
- How often does he stretch?
- How alert is he?
- How of ten does he lay down?
- Does he seem to be interested in food?

Defecation and Urination:

- How often does your horse urinate?
- What is normal color and consistency of urine for your horse?
- How often does your gelding drop his penis out of his sheath?
- Does he seem to have any difficulty urinating?
- Is your horse passing manure?
- Does his manure seem to be normal in consistency?
- When you listen to your horse's abdomen with a stethoscope, what sounds do you hear? How loud are they? How do they change before and after a meal?

Musculoskeletal System:

- Does your horse have any swellings or lumps that are not normal for him?
- Does your horse have any abnormal swellings?
- Does he seem to be lame or sore anywhere?
- Is he reluctant to move?

Objective Assessment:

Heart rate:	Normal Adult: 36-48 beats/minute Normal Foal: 36-66 beats/minute
Respiratory rate:	Normal Adult: 8-16 breaths/minute Normal Foal: 8-32 breaths/minute
Temperature:	Normal Adult: 99-101 degrees Fahrenheit Normal Foal: 99-102 degrees Fahrenheit
Mucous membranes:	Gums should be pink, not grey or brick red. They should be moist, and when touched, they should go back to pink within 2 seconds.
Digital pulse:	The pulse on the back of the pastern should be difficult to feel and should not have a strong beat. The feet should not be hot.
Abdominal sounds:	Gurgling sounds should be heard on both sides, but excess rumbling should not be heard.

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FIRST AID KIT

A good first aid kit is invaluable in the event of an equine emergency. The following is a basic list of items which are easily acquired and helpful in many cases. Gathering these ahead of time is much better than scrambling to find them at the time at which an emergency occurs! Keep a checklist in the kit so that you know what it should contain, and so that you can restock items as they are used.

1. Diagnostic Equipment:

- Stethoscope
- Thermometer
- Flashlight with fresh batteries
- Hoof pick

2. Bandaging Material:

- Scissors
- Non-stick wound covering (Telfa Pads)
- Gauze wrap (Kling)
- Leg cottons (Fleece leg wraps, roll cotton, or quilt batting)
- Adhesive elastic bandages (Elasticon)
- Adhesive non-elastic bandages (white medical tape or duct tape)
- Ace bandages
- Non-adhesive wraps (Vetwrap or Co-Flex)
- Diapers (these make nice, clean, absorbent temporary wraps)

3. Medications:

- Disinfectant (Providone-iodine solution (Betadine)
- Antibacterial ointment (Furacin or chlorhexidine)
- Phenylbutazone (bute)
- Contact Lens Sterile Saline (can flush wounds or flush matter from eyes)

4. Other equipment:

- Clean plastic bucket
- Clean warm water
- Clean towels
- Twitch (Can use binder twine + hammer handle with a hole drilled in it.
- Your veterinarian's phone number and list of alternatives
- **Please note that it is preferable to talk to your veterinarian before attempting first aid on your horse, especially with regard to splinting, treating or wrapping wounds or using medications such as phenylbutazone.**

All information was copied & taken from internet:
http://www.horsenetwork.com/vet/askthevettopicsright.html

Additional Notes from Lecture: