



Palm Beach Equine Medical Centers

Equine Emergency Tips

Unfortunately as horse owners, it is inevitable that your horse will incur an injury. As responsible owners we should be prepared for every situation with basic knowledge in wound care.

First, evaluate the situation to get an idea of the wound severity by the reaction of the horse. Remember that your safety is first, if the horse is in a state of panic or thrashing keep a distance till professional help arrives. If your horse is entangled try to extricate him so he doesn't make the wound worse by struggling to break free, once again keep your safety in mind.

If heavy bleeding is occurring apply pressure with a pressure bandage or press directly on the wound if it can't be bandaged. Your horse's well being is only in major danger if the blood is spurting or gushing. Use sterile gauze, a bandage, or towel to stop the bleeding till your veterinarian arrives.

Asses the situation to determine whether the wound is life threatening or requires an emergency call to the veterinarian. In addition to heavy bleeding other emergency signs include:

- An embedded foreign object
- An injury more than skin deep
- An injury to the eye
- Clear yellowish or blood tinged fluid-seeping from a deep puncture near a joint or tendon
- Severe lameness or deformation of the affected area

In rare instances shock may occur. Signs of shock include irregular breathing, cold extremities, an unfocused look in the eyes, and a shallow pulse. If these signs occur apply pressure to the injury, do not move the horse, cover with a blanket and immediately call your veterinarian.

Prior to your veterinarian arriving, discuss with him/her the following:

- Should you remove any foreign objects?
- Copiously flush the wound with tap or distilled water or physiologic saline solution.
- Gently wash the wound using surgical scrub and gauze squares discarding each square after it becomes soiled. Repeat this until the gauze remains clean of visible dirt.

- Medicate an obviously superficial wound with an over-the-counter antibiotic paste or ointment. Deep or contaminated wounds may require a systematic antibiotic or a tetanus booster administered by your vet.
- Bandage, if possible.

The best preparation is to have your own equine first aid kit. We have included a checklist of items for your kit. All of these items can be purchased through Palm Beach Equine Medical Centers. Most lacerations and injuries occur to the distal extremities. White cotton quilts and leg wraps are extremely useful in wrapping an injured leg while awaiting your veterinarian. Reusable cotton quilts and bandages or polo wraps can be found at your local tack store.

- ✓ Emergency contact phone numbers
- ✓ Sterile gauze
- ✓ Clean cotton leg bandages and wraps
- ✓ Syringes and needles
- ✓ Saline solution
- ✓ Thermometer
- ✓ Vet-Wrap or similar product
- ✓ Stethoscope
- ✓ Non-stick pads
- ✓ Cling wrap
- ✓ Disinfectant scrub such as Betadine Solution
- ✓ Antibiotic cream
- ✓ Duct tape
- ✓ White medical tape
- ✓ Scissors
- ✓ Epsom salt
- ✓ Cotton roll
- ✓ Injectable Banamine
- ✓ Hoof testers
- ✓ Farrier's nail/shoe puller

Good luck and remain calm. We are always here to assist you. When in doubt call Palm Beach Equine Medical Centers, it is our pleasure to provide you with guidance and assist in the health of your horse.

Palm Beach Equine Clinic (561) 793-1599

Katy Equine Clinic (281) 391-8250

East End Equine Clinic (631) 903-5193