

STANDARD EQUINE FIRST AID

Part I of II

MID-HUDSON VETERINARY PRACTICE, PC

February 2008



It's early morning and you're headed out to the barn to feed your horses quick before dashing off to work. Beau and Sunny always get your day off to a great start with a friendly greeting at the gate. You can see Beau, but where on earth is Sunny? Then when you enter the barn you find him. He is down in his stall. He is looking at his sides and he is in obvious discomfort. He gets up as soon as he sees you only to groan and go right back down again.

This is clearly out of your normal routine and not how you planned the beginning of your day.

But just how well have you prepared yourself and your barn supplies for this alarming scenario?

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

Here are a few elements of basic first aid that may help to lessen the stress of waiting for the vet's arrival, as well as help your horse.

Colic

Assess the severity of the symptoms. Keep the horse walking if possible – many mild colicky cramps may pass in a few minutes. Give 5-10 cc of Banamine IV/IM/by mouth only as directed by a vet. Administer Maalox or Mylanta liquid, by mouth, only as directed by a vet. Many "cribbers" will have mild colicky episodes that respond well to 5 cc. of Banamine and 3-4 oral syringes of Maalox.

Down Horse

Put a halter and lead rope on

the horse. Encourage him to rise using loud noises, grain, and (if necessary) scare tactics like waving a trash bag or crop. Coordinate your encouragement with the horse's own attempts at rising. Administer Banamine or Dexamethasone only as directed by a vet. Re-evaluate... **Does the vet still need to come out?**

Acute severe lameness

Always assess the environment; is there another horse nearby? Is there a fence-rail down? Then evaluate the horse; is the stance normal or odd, is there any swelling, do you see any type of wound? Can he walk at all? Is a shoe missing? If you can tell which foot/limb is affected, then is there any

heat in the foot? Don't give Bute or Banamine unless directed by the vet.

Bleeding wound

Apply manual pressure using a clean stack of gauze pads. Do not dab at the wound. Encourage the blood to clot by applying gauze – the fibers actually provide a surface on which the blood can start to clot. Wrap the gauze in place using VetWrap or standing wrap, or at least an Ace bandage, if you can. Do not attempt to rinse or cleanse the wound unless directed by a vet. Do not apply any ointments or salves unless directed by a vet.



To be continued next month.



M.H.V.P.

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REMEMBER;

- Assess the complete situation prior to calling the vet, this will help give us a clear picture of the severity of your horse's problem
- Keep your emergency kit fully stocked and handy
- Check with a vet before administering medications
- Remaining calm and focused will help your horse, your vet and you
- Keep our phone number posted in the barn

THE EMERGENCY KIT

We are now selling a comprehensive kit that includes over 55 items including Banamine, Bute, Dexamethasone, Maalox and antibiotic tablets.

Call for more information or to order yourself a kit today.

(845) 225-3100