

# STANDARD EQUINE FIRST AID

Part II of II

MID-HUDSON VETERINARY PRACTICE, PC

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In part one of our two part first aid series we covered basic first aid for wounds, acute lameness, colic and a down horse. Here in part two we address the first aid treatment of choke, hives, swollen eyes and grain overload.

## Are you prepared to treat your horse in an emergency situation?

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

**Choke** Called esophageal "choke" by vets, this usually occurs when horses either eat too fast or have poor dental health and masses of feed are incompletely swallowed. Although not an airway emergency, horses often act very stressed.

- Keep your horse calm and quiet.
- Remove all hay, feed, and water and call your vet.
- Injectable sedatives like Ace or Rompun can help your horse relax, and often helps them to relieve the obstruction on their own.

**Hives** Often a summertime occurrence, these raised skin reactions may be due to weeds in new hay or in pasture, insect bites, or soaps and fly sprays.

- Rinse the horse with cool water and call the vet.
- Antihistamines like Tri-Hist, Benadryl, or Hydroxyzine can help relieve swelling.
- Azium (Dexamethasone) or other corticosteroid may be needed in more severe cases.

**Swollen Eye** Often horses will reach through fence-rails to grass on the other side. Even small impacts to the head can generate a very swollen eyelid.

- Check for a wound and call the vet.
- Cold compresses will usually help.
- Banamine paste or injectable will begin to decrease swelling so you and your vet can evaluate the eye itself for damage.



**Grain Overload** Always keep grain in a secure, latched area. Occasionally a horse will break in and "shoplift".

- Volume is important! Try to ascertain how much feed/grain is missing. Is it all over the floor? If so, sweep up and try to measure it. Is it your horse's feed or a different feed, i.e. unsoaked beet pulp or sweet feed?
- Call the vet. A hot, watery bran mash may be suggested.
- A low-dose of Banamine may be recommended for the next few days to prevent laminitis.

*Always assess the situation and call your veterinarian before administering any medications.*

**(845) 225-3100**

## DID YOU KNOW.....

**Our office has fully stocked emergency kits available for purchase. Call and have one delivered to your barn today.**



**M.H.V.P.  
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## Emergency Kit Contents—why these supplies?

- **Banamine** – for colic and swollen eyes
- **Bute** – for lameness and fever
- **Azium** – for hives and COPD ("heaves")
- **Triple antibiotic ointment** – for minor wounds and scrapes
- **Maalox/Mylanta liquid** – for mild colic episodes, especially with "cribbers"
- **Oral dose syringe** – for administering Maalox