



Be Prepared for an Equine Health Emergency

Medical emergencies involving horses, while not common, do occur. The important aspect of equine emergencies is to be prepared. The first step is to not let panic take control. Follow these guidelines from the American Association of Equine Practitioners (AAEP) to help you prepare for an equine emergency:

1. Keep your veterinarian's number by each phone, including how the practitioner can be reached after hours.
2. Consult with your regular veterinarian regarding a back-up or referring veterinarian's number in case you cannot reach your regular veterinarian quickly enough.
3. Know in advance the most direct route to an equine surgery center in case you need to transport the horse.
4. Post the names and phone numbers of nearby friends and neighbors who can assist you in an emergency while you wait for the veterinarian.
5. Prepare a first aid kit and store it in a clean, dry, readily accessible place. Make sure that family members and other barn users know where the kit is. Also, keep a first aid kit in your horse trailer or towing vehicle, and a pared-down version to carry on the trail.

First aid kits can be simple or elaborate. Here is a list of some essential items:

- Cotton roll
- Cling wrap (gauze roll)
- Gauze pads, in assorted sizes
- Sharp scissors
- Sterile plain contact lens saline
- Betadine scrub & solution
- Cup or container
- Rectal thermometer with string and clip attached or digital thermometer
- Vetwrap
- Latex gloves
- Non stick pads
- Stethoscope
- NSAID's (talk with your veterinarian)
- Clippers

Please discuss emergency situations and how to handle them with your veterinarian. Good planning can minimize your stress during an emergency.

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