

Horses & Colic

Few words strike more fear in the mind of a horse owner than “colic”. Colic is one of the leading causes of death in horses but prompt veterinary care can reduce that risk.

If you see your horse showing these signs, be sure to call your veterinarian right away. Not every colic requires a vet visit, but early, frequent communication with your vet is key to the best possible outcome.

- ✓ Paws at the ground
- ✓ Sweats
- ✓ Acts restless
- ✓ Lies down, rolls or thrashes
- ✓ Kicks at their abdomen area
- ✓ Looks at their sides



Changes in Vital Signs



INCREASED BREATHING

NORMAL: 12-20 breaths per minute
MODERATE/SEVERE: >30 breaths per minute



INCREASED CAPILLARY REFILL TIME

NORMAL: <2 seconds
MODERATE/SEVERE: >3 seconds



CHANGE IN GUT SOUNDS

NORMAL: Sounds on both sides of abdomen
MODERATE/SEVERE: Decreased to no sounds



CHANGE IN FECAL CONSISTENCY

NORMAL: 6-10 manures/24 hours, moist formed fecal balls
MODERATE/SEVERE: Small, hard feces, constipation or profuse diarrhea



TEMPERATURE CHANGES

NORMAL: 99-101.5°F
MODERATE/SEVERE: Under 99 or over 101°F



ELEVATED HEART RATE

NORMAL: 38-44 beats per minute
MODERATE/SEVERE: >60 beats per minute



CHANGES IN GUM COLOR

NORMAL: Light pink
MODERATE/SEVERE: Brick red



PASSING GAS

NORMAL: Yes
MODERATE/SEVERE: No

ASPCA PET HEALTH INSURANCE



ASPCA® Pet Health Insurance Program for Horses includes coverage for equine colic.* Get a free quote or enroll today at www.ProtectYourHorse.com.



Contact your veterinarian if you suspect your horse has colic.

For quick reference, store this handout with your first aid materials or post around your barn or boarding facility.

VETERINARIAN PHONE NUMBER

Chart Source: Crabbe, Barb (June, 2002) Colic Symptoms Checklist for Horses (www.equisearch.com).

*For Horse Plans: Product not available in all states. Subject to underwriting. For all terms and conditions visit aspca.petinsurance.com/more-info/sample-plans-for-horses.

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