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Hello Everyone

It is March, and March only means one thing!! And it is not St Patrick's Day—MARCH FLIES!!!!!! They are huge, sting hard and drive our horses mad. So if you go riding, dose up with fly-spray on you and your horse.

As this gets sent away to you all, Wayne is in South Australia at his clinic in Renmark. We must apologise for the changes of venue but our helper over there was just trying to get the best deal for the clinic and the participants regarding facilities, yarding etc etc.

But the update is, weather is fine and all are having a ball.

I have put up some expressions of interest for clinics in Broken Hill and Tamworth so if you know anyone horsey in those areas, spread the word for us..... and just last night an enquiry came through for Rutherglen/Albury area in Victoria - looks like Wayne gets to go to Victoria.

The horse training part of our equine enterprise has exploded - Wayne has quite a few horses booked in for over the next 4 months - I just love to watch the owner's faces as they see their horses transformed into soft, respectful, well trained partners to their owners (hey girls, do you think there could a 'husband whisperer out there somewhere so us girls could have soft, respectful, well trained partners too!!) Whoops, don't tell Wayne I wrote that!!

And guess what..... Wayne and I are trying the wonderful sport of Polocrosse. We have joined the Gulgong Cub and just attend the Practice days to see how we go....no Carnivals for us for a little while. Our first practice day was a hoot and we, including our horses, had fun. It is fast and you need your wits about you.....you also need a horse which is responsive and respectful.....we know we have the right horses.....we just need to get up to speed with rules, tactics, strategy, teamwork, catching the ball and throwing the ball etc etc. It is a great friendly club and it is something Wayne and I can do together for some fun and time out from the farm work.

Hope to see you at a clinic soon.....Wayne and Jenny

CLINIC SCHEDULE

- ⇒ Renmark, SA - 5,6,7,8 March 2010 - 4 day clinic
- ⇒ Canowindra, NSW - 17and 18 April 2010 - 2 day
- ⇒ Expressions of interest to hold clinics in

**BROKEN HILL, TAMWORTH/URALLA,
RUTHERGLEN/ALBURY**

EMAIL NOW TO SHOW YOUR INTEREST

STARTING BOOKING IN FOR YOUR 2010 CLINIC

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- ◆ First Aid for Your Horse
- ◆ Test those Pathways
- ◆ Quote of the Month
- ◆ Great Horse Books
- ◆ Clinic dates

GREAT HORSE BOOKS

'Feeding and Nutrition of Horses'

by John Kohnke

AND

'Horse Sense'

By Peter Huntington and Fran Cleland

Both great books as references

QUOTE OF THE MONTH

There is no secret so close as that between a rider and his horse
Robert Smith Surtees



FIRST AID FOR YOUR HORSES

*Do you have a First Aid Kit for your horse? Do you know how to take your horse's vital signs?
Would you know the signs of whether your horse is ill or not?*

There are several important health indicators to understand and be aware of. These include:

- behaviour
- appetite
- drinking/urination
- defecation
- body condition
- hair coat condition
- movement and
- vital signs

1. Behaviour/Demeanour

The healthy horse is bright, alert and responsive to stimuli. The head is carried in normal position, with the nose higher than the chest. Eyes should be bright with no signs of discharge or cloudiness.

2. Appetite

Appetite is a very good indicator of the health status of an individual horse. Most horses have very regular eating patterns and any deviation from this should be monitored. For example, leaving feed, or lack of interest in feed, is often the first sign of illness.

3. Drinking/Urination

A healthy 500kg horse will drink approximately 27-32 litres of water per day depending upon work level and weather conditions. In hot weather, water intake increases, in cold weather it decreases. After hard work intake also increases. The same horse will urinate approximately 11-14 litres per day. You should make yourself familiar with the smell, colour and quantity of 'normal' urine. These parameters vary with age, sex and diet.

It is important that you can monitor water intake so early detection of declining intake is possible. Reduced water intake leads quickly to dehydration which can result in serious illness.

4. Defecation

The amount and consistency of manure produced each day is dependant upon the diet of the horse.

Horses will produce higher amounts of manure on a high roughage diet, and less manure if on a high concentrate diet.

No matter what the diet is, manure should be moist, formed and should break up when it hits the ground. Make sure you are familiar with what is normal for the horses in your care - colour, consistency, smell and amount.

5. Body Condition

The healthy horse should maintain a good body condition at all times. It should be neither too fat nor too thin. Rapid weight loss is an indicator that the horse requires immediate attention.

6. Hair Coat Condition

A healthy horse should have a shiny, flat hair coat. Even the winter coat will be shiny and will lay flat, unless very cold. The skin should be supple, free from signs of parasitic infections, sores, baldness, lumps etc.

7. Movement & Limbs

The animal should be free moving, have an even gait with no signs of lameness. The limbs should be clean with no sign of swelling, heat or pain.

8. Mouth/Nose

There should be no sign of discharge, and the horse's breath should be sweet smelling.

1. Temperature

The procedure for checking temperature is as follows:

- stand to one side of the horse, at the rear. Do not stand at the back or you risk getting kicked.
- "zero" the thermometer by pressing the button (applies to digital thermometers only).
- Lift the tail and insert the thermometer at an angle. The angle is important as you want to touch the end of the thermometer to the rectal wall, not into a pile of poo!
- Wait for the thermometer to beep before withdrawing it carefully.

Read the thermometer panel to find out the temperature of the horse.

The normal temperature range in horses is **36.8°-38.5°C**. A horse whose normal temperature is 36.8° is in fact unwell if it presents with a temperature of 38.5°C, emphasising the need to know what is normal in each individual.

2. Pulse (heart rate)

The procedure for checking heart rates varies depending on the location of the pulse. To check heart rate behind the elbow using a stethoscope we use the following procedure:

- stand at the horses shoulder on the "near" side.
- push the stethoscope in behind the horse's elbow, towards the heart.
- move it around until you can clearly hear the "lub-dup" of the horse's heart beat.
- record the number of beats (each "lub-dup" is one beat) for a 15 second period.
- multiply your figure by 4 to get a "beats per minute" reading.



Measuring heart rate using a stethoscope behind the elbow

Other places available to measure heart rate include the facial artery (on the side of the jaw) and the digital artery (in the fetlock). You will learn how to take a heart rate from these sites using your fingers during a practical training workshop.



Measuring heart rate under the jaw



Measuring heart rate in the fetlock region (digital pulse)

Normal heart rates in horses at rest range from 25 - 40 beats per minute (bpm). Like temperature, the situation in each individual horse varies greatly. Anything above or below needs to be reported to your supervisor.

3. Respiration

Respiration in the horse is measured by either observing

- the rise and fall of the flank and rib cage, or
- monitoring exhalation of air from the nostrils (fairly easy in cold weather).

Information sourced from TAFE notes, Horse Sense, and the internet.

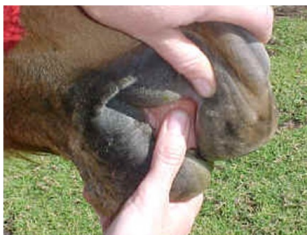
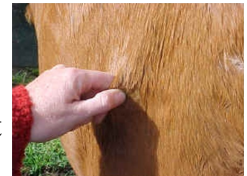


Measuring respiration by monitoring exhalation of air from the nostrils

Normal respiration rates for horses are approximately 12 - 16 breaths per minute, and should not be noisy.

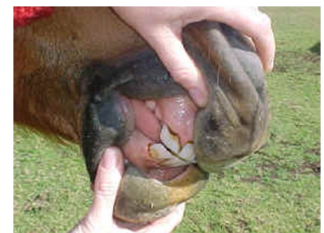
4. Hydration and circulation

The hydration status of a horse is measured by pinching the skin on the shoulder and noting the time it takes to return to normal. The skin in a well horse will return to normal within a couple of seconds, while the skin of a dehydrated horse will remain like a "tent". The skin of the neck can also be used for this test, but it is not as accurate as the skin of the shoulder.



Circulation is measured by a capillary refill test. This is where we press our thumb onto the horse's gum and measure how long it takes for the blood to return to the area. When we press them the blood is pushed out of the area. In a healthy horse it will return within 2 seconds of lifting our thumb or finger. If it doesn't then the horse's blood is not circulating through its body properly, and your supervisor needs to be notified.

Normal gums are pink and healthy looking. Excessively pale or dark gums indicating circulatory failure of some sort (eg. shock).



It is always a good idea to get into a routine of observing your horse morning and night to get to know your horse's routine and behaviours.

The more you know about your horse the better you will be able to answer those 'hard' questions from the vet. Questions you really should know the answer to.

And better still, if you can take your horse's vital signs it could save your horse's life. Make it part of your grooming routine! The better you are at it, the more comfortable your horse will be.

Take regular recordings of your horse's vital signs for health history.

Next page gives you a guideline of what sort of things you could need in a First Aid kit for your horse.....

FIRST AID KIT FOR YOUR HORSE

The following list of items would be useful in a first aid kit:

- Thermometer - Digital is the easiest to use
- stethoscope
- sharp scissors
- forceps for removing foreign bodies from wounds
- scalpel blades (#10 or #20)
- antiseptic (povidone iodine or hibiclens) for wound cleaning
- non stick pad such as Jelonet to go directly onto a wound under a bandage
- cotton wool (the first layer of a bandage)
- gauze or crepe bandage (second layer of a bandage)
- Vetwrap or elastoplast (outer layer of bandage)
- swabs for cleaning the wound area
- alcohol swabs
- antibiotic ointment (bear in mind that these have a limited shelf life)
- Ezi-boot (for hoof injuries such as abscesses)

Make up a list of everything that is in the kit, and stick it to the lid. It should then be the your responsibility to regularly check the contents and replace items as necessary.

First aid kits need to be kept somewhere accessible, but free from dirt, rain etc.

MAKE SURE YOU USE A WATERPROOF CONTAINER WITH A GOOD FITTING LID

Remember, you are administering First Aid only - you should always call a vet to look at any sickness or injury your horse may be suffering from.



TESTING THOSE LEARNING PATHWAYS SO YOU HAVE BEEN TO A WAYNE CASLICK HORSES NATURALLY CLINIC.....MAYBE EVEN TWO OR THREE!

Below are some little tests you can put yourself and your horse through....at home....to see how well you have digested all the skills and knowledge imparted to you over a clinic weekend

- Enter the horse's yard, halter in hand. The horse is to approach you and make contact. Ask yourself....Does the horse acknowledge you or do you need to get horse's attention? Does horse draw into your space when asked?
- Put the halter on with the horse's head turned towards you and lower than the horses wither. Check yourself if you used correct body positioning; Horses head remains positioned; Halter is correctly fitted and tied.
- Can you unrug and rug the horse from both sides? Check yourself with did your horse remain relaxed; Did you display correct positioning of body to horse; Did you display awareness of safety.
- Rub your horse all over his body with your hand, simulating grooming and demonstrating desensitisation in all areas of body. Ask yourself did the rubbing include face and sensitive areas; Can I do the same with aids such as raincoat, plastic bags etc.
- Pick up your horse's feet simulating farrier technique. Make sure your horses head is turned towards you. Ask yourself did you display good awareness of safety; and the correct positioning of horse's feet and head.

If you can achieve the above with your horse..... and more..... then you would be well on your way to achieving your Level One with *Horses Naturally*
We try to incorporate safety, all round knowledge and skill with horses in general as well as all the principles of natural horsemanship.

If you have been to one our clinics then you would realise our way of teaching and the back up support you have after attending a clinic.

The above is only a small sample of competencies that you can go through with your horse.....have a talk with Wayne about the Levels system