

How to be prepared for an equine emergency:

If you own horses long enough, you are likely to confront a medical emergency at some point. There are many different kinds of emergencies a horse owner may encounter - it is a good idea to learn how to recognize serious problems and respond quickly. Taking the appropriate action while waiting for your veterinarian to arrive may be life-saving.

Preparation is vital when confronted with an emergency. Make a point of mentally rehearsing the steps you would take in a stressful situation to help avoid panicking. The following is a list of steps you can take to help be prepared for any situation.

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 for easy access.

* Your veterinarian can help you put together a useful first aid kit - ask us for tips on creating your own!

Kirkton Vet Clinic

1911 Mary Street
Kirkton, ON
N0K 1K0

Kirkton Veterinary Clinic

FIRST AID



EQUINE SERVICES

24 hour emergencies
519-229-8911

When to call the vet:

Sometimes the biggest question we face when we realize there is something wrong with our horse is whether or not we should call the vet. It's important to remember that you can always call - better to ask your questions over the phone and have peace of mind than to leave something you are concerned about. We are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week for emergencies, and that includes phone calls!

Normal Vital Parameters

Temperature	37.0-38.5 Celsius
Heart Rate	36-44 beats/min
Respiratory Rate	8-20 breaths/min

* If your horse demonstrates any vital parameter outside the normal range, a vet visit may be indicated.

Medication

Often horse owners have a few different types of medications sitting around the farm in a first aid kit. Remember that not all medications suit all types of emergencies. If you are not certain of how a drug works, or what drugs can be used in combination, make sure you speak to a veterinarian prior to administration. Sometimes it is best to wait until the horse has been assessed to give anything at all.

What to do while you wait...



Colic:

- Take away all feed material from your horse (Water is ok)
- If you give any pain medications, record your horse's temperature and heart rate prior to administration
- Keep the horse moving if it wants to roll - walking can help some mild colics to resolve



Wounds:

- Take your horse to a clean, dry area if safe to move them
- Flush dirt and debris from wound with a cold hose
- Apply a clean bandage if possible to restrict contamination
- If you think sutures are required, do not apply any topical wound treatments (Blu-spray, Alu-spray, etc.)



Choke (esophageal impaction):

- Take away all feed material from your horse
- Call your veterinarian even if choke resolves on its own as aspiration pneumonia can occur as a complication from even mild chokes
- Do not try to administer water or any other liquid



Eye Emergencies:

- Call your veterinarian - any eye injury is an emergency!
- Take your horse to a clean, dry area - away from direct sunlight if possible
- Do not apply any topical ointments unless you have consulted with your vet first - some can worsen an eye injury