

HENDERSON EQUINE SERVICES

STAN HENDERSON DVM JACKIE HENDERSON DVM

Cell: 519-319-3274 (Stan) 519-318-3274 (Jackie)

hendersonfarm@quadro.net hendersonequineservices.com

PREPARING YOUR EQUINE FIRST AID KIT

Human and equine first aid kits are an imperative part of a well-managed stable. Though your veterinarian is always on call, having a thorough knowledge of emergency and critical care for your horse and being prepared with an appropriately stocked equine first aid kit could save your horse in case of an emergency. It is important to think about where your first aid kit will be stored before determining what it will contain. You should consider having a first aid kit for all trucks and trailers used to transport horses as well as a first aid kit for the barn.

Creating multiple kits increases the chance of having the needed supplies in the right location in an emergency. The first aid kit that is stored in your stable may be a lot larger and have a more robust set of medications and tools. Your trailer kits maybe more streamlined, intended to provide care until you get home or a veterinarian arrives on scene. When putting together a kit think about how many horses you may be treating – this affects how much you could/should have on hand. Are you managing a single horse or are you responsible for a herd of fifty?

Remember, items in your kit with an expiration date will have to be replaced, hopefully because you never have a need to use them. Take the time to discuss your plans with your veterinarian. They are your partner in maintaining your horse's health and will be able to guide you to best meet your needs.

STABLE FIRST AID KITS

In your stable, think about the number of horses you have in your herd. Have different types and sizes of bandages to accommodate different horses and their wounds. Have many types of wound cleaner (utilizing saline is a great way to clean small wounds but will be ineffective for flushing a large wound). Have additional medication as appropriate for your horse and your environment. If you are lucky, any medication you place in your kit will likely expire. Check the dates on medication twice annually, dispose of expired medication properly and just be happy you didn't have an emergency.

FIRST AID KIT

BASICS

- Thermometer to complete a physical exam
- Flashlight/head lamp
- Bandage scissors
- Plastic gloves
- +/- Stethoscope to complete a physical exam

LEG BANDAGING MATERIAL

(The order of materials is also the order in which you would apply these bandages.)

- Cleaning supplies (betadine solution or chlorohexadine solution or scrub) to help clean a wound and 60mL syringes to help flush the wound. Clean, running water will do quite well, too;
- Non-adherent bandages – Telfa pads are the most commonly used and available. Feminine hygiene pads can be used for a non-adherent bandage in a pinch;
- Gauze rolls will help keep your first layer of bandaging (Telfa Pads) in place;
- Padding of some sort should surround the gauze. Cotton, either disposable or washable, will work well;
- VetWrap as a final layer to apply pressure to the wound.

FOOT BANDAGE

For hoof abscesses and puncture wounds

(The order of materials is also the order in which you would apply these bandages.)

- Animal Intex pad (slightly damp)
- Heavy plastic bag or 5L LRS bag - to go over the hoof
- Duct tape to secure the bag – cut strips before applying bandage to make application easier

MEDICATIONS

- Topical antibiotic medication or hydrogel can be utilized to help with minor wounds. Beyond the would cleaning agents mentioned above, using antibacterial cream such as DermaGel or triple antibiotic cream will cover most of the concerns;
- Nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory medications are often carried and can be obtained from your veterinarian. The common examples are phenylbutazone (commonly known as Bute), banamine, or Previcox;
- Medications utilized for sedation can be obtained from your veterinarian and can be especially useful when traveling. Further discussion with your veterinarian will provide guidance if you are considering carrying it in your vehicle kit.

OTHER TIPS

- Put an expiration date on your first aid kit – while you should be swapping out items in the kit as they're used or expiring, putting an expiration date on your kit is a great way to trigger thought about it;

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- First aid kits are the first place that people raid for extra supplies. If you take something out, make a note, and replace it. The last thing you want is to go to your kit in a time of emergency and find that someone removed the medication or supply you need;
- Educate yourself. Don't buy products and put them in your first aid kit if you don't know how to use them. Understand how to do a Physical Exam. Learn different methods for restraint, as your safety and the safety of those around you is critical. Learn how to get oral paste into your horse;
- Have questions? Contact us to talk about setting up a first aid kit for your barn, 519 318 3274. We can provide you with a complete barn or truck and trailer kit and help you tailor it to your farm. Contact our clinic to purchase a first aid kit or to restock supplies. We can also visit your farm to provide first aid training.

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