

Horse Safety and Adaptive First Aid for the Trail



and Equine Health



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This program was created in 2003 to establish and educate Dude Ranch owners/operators and other trail riding programs about safety and risk management practices related to Horse Safety and First Aid for the Trail. There is currently no group that has more expertise in guided trail riding than DRA ranches. We drew on that expertise to provide some productive guidance for member ranches.

The DRA member ranches, on an average day,

place up to 4,700 riders in the saddle logging an average of one million hours of riding per season. Our goal is to help ranchers promote responsible and safety conscious horse programs and to assist staff in handling any emergencies that may occur out on the trails.

Horseback riding and other dude ranch activities conducted oftentimes in the outdoor wilderness, and/or mountainous terrain, include inherent and other risks that can cause injury, damage, death, or other loss. As a result, it is recognized that ranches cannot





Please Note: These practices are suggestions only. In addition, these practices do not attempt to encompass every possible practice or consideration that may be desirable in each circumstance. Importantly, consideration or implementation of these practices does not guarantee that a ranch's program will be completely safe, or that participation in its horse program will be free from harm.

From the Program
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assure the safety of their guests and that participants share in the responsibility for their own well-being and the well-being of others on any trip. The Horse Safety Program is an endeavor to assist ranches in managing risks and considering safety in their ongoing effort to provide their guests with a positive experience.

This program relies upon the integrity of participants to review their individual ranch programs and procedures with consideration for the horse safety and risk management practices discussed. To stay current with the program, each ranch must attend a seminar at least once every three years. The owner or general manager of the ranch should be the person attending.

This program will provide educational seminars required for ongoing evaluations of safety and risk management practices and associated skills, helping to improve the quality and safety of your programs.

The following guidance reflects the accepted suggested practices that our ranches consider in their endeavor to run responsible horse programs. We believe these practices will serve as a tool and a resource.

We recognize that horseback riding and other dude ranch activities, conducted often in the outdoor, wilderness and or mountainous terrain, include inherent and other risks that can cause injury, damage, death, or other losses. As a result, we recognize that ranches cannot assure the safety of their guests. In addition, we recognize that each ranch program is unique and responsible for the details of its own operation, and that some or all these suggested practices may be considered or implemented in a variety of different ways. Specific ways of addressing these practices will vary with the mission and purpose of the ranches design, activities, guests, and other factors. We hope these suggested practices will be a productive tool as you regularly review your operations.

The DRA Horse Safety Program is entering its 24th year and continues to produce liability claims results well below industry averages. As a result, general liability insurance

rates for DRA members have not increased (unlike property rates) for over a decade. The number of injuries related to riding programs remains at a low level. The underwriters that have an active interest in ranch business place significant value in the proactive loss control the Program produces. As it should, the Program continues to evolve, as new techniques and procedures are added, and current ones refined. These changes only add to its value. While each ranch is responsible for running its own safe horse program, the DRA Horse Safety Program gives them a tool to do so. So as the saying goes..." keep doing what you're doing".





Horse Safety

The information provided in this seminar may serve as a guideline for reviewing your current horse program. Not all areas may apply to your program. These areas are covered in a seminar

format to encourage discussion. The following represents a general summary of the topics discussed in the Horse Safety Seminar.

Site

The facility at which your program is conducted affects your ability to create responsible environments for horses and riders.

Consider:

1. Fences should be well maintained. Rails or wire should be secure. Do your gates open and close correctly for your riders? All riders should pass through the gate at a walk.
2. Hitching rails should be secure. Can they handle a horse pulling back? Are they situated so observers are clear of conflicts? Are they spacious enough for your activities?
 - Grooming and tacking areas should be kept free of debris such as coats, hats, buckets and mounting blocks.
3. There should be a designated area for mounting and dismounting. This area should never be congested.
4. Stalls should be kept neat, clean and safe for the horse.
5. Rules, regulations, restrictions, and laws should be clearly posted.
6. Arenas should be the appropriate size for the activities being offered. They should be in good repair.
7. Spectator viewing areas should be designated.
8. Are mounting blocks or platforms at every site where people are mounting and dismounting? Or is there a mounting/dismounting plan in place for those requiring aid?



Trails

Are the trails that are being used appropriate for the level of ride being offered?

Consider:

1. Trails should be free of hazards such as downfall and overhanging branches. Footing can be an issue. Holes, loose rock, and sudden dips can affect the type of ride allowed on a given trail. Endeavor to monitor these issues, to the extent feasible. Consider informing guests of these and other risks inherent in horseback riding.
2. Be aware if you share the trails with ATVs, backpackers, cyclists and other animals and wildlife such as llamas, buffalo, or bears.
3. Consider whether your herd can deal with the types of bridges they may encounter on your trail. Approaches, width, and length of a bridge may be issues.
4. Gates should be in good repair and open and close correctly. They should open wide enough for riders to pass through.
5. Bees and ground wasps may be hazardous in some climates.
6. Know what emergency access is near your trails. Can an emergency vehicle get close? What is available and approximately how long does it take to respond? Does your area use helicopters? If so, are you registered with them in case of an emergency?
7. Maps of existing trails should be available for emergencies. This is helpful in directing EMS.

If the wrangler carries a smart phone with a capable GPS application, this may prove helpful to EMS. Other tracking devices, SPOT and Inreach.





Horses

Screening and selection of prospective horses are critical elements of your programs. Considering what is offered within your riding program will influence what you are looking for when making reasonable efforts to match horse to rider.

Consider:

1. Understanding and dealing with the nature of the horse is of primary importance. This should influence horse selection, staff education, guest orientation, and your instructional programs.
2. Adjust for individual behavior in the herd and on the trail (pecking order).
3. When selecting horses, ground manners are very important. Standing quietly for grooming, tacking, mounting, dismounting is critical.
4. The skill level of the rider and their body size should influence the horse that is assigned to a rider.
5. Immediate adjustments should be made when the horse and rider appear to NOT be a good match.
6. Maintaining the health of your herd is extremely important: feed, water, vaccinations, worming, hoof care, teeth, illness, and injury. Poor health can affect the horse's disposition and can lead to an accident.

The size of the herd you maintain should be related to your guest capacity and the riding program your ranch offers.

Any horse health care done on property without a vet should be documented and logged.

Equipment & Tack

Equipment and tack should be properly maintained. This should include a pre and post season safety check of all equipment that should be documented.

1. Establish an ongoing procedure for checking tack items. This procedure should be put in writing and followed by all members of the barn/wrangling staff. The purpose is to ensure they are in good working condition.



2. Equipment should be checked and documented prior to each ride including leather, stitching, snaps, buckles, stirrups, bridle, reins, latigo, pads and cinch.
3. Remove any equipment that is faulty.
4. Endeavor to check that all repairs are done properly.
5. Leather items should be conditioned properly to help maintain leather integrity.
6. Educate the staff about adjusting equipment for the proper fit to the horse and rider. This should include adjusting bridles, curb straps, cinches, saddle size, pads, and stirrups.

Create a maintenance log to document safety checks and repair work.

Staffing

Barn managers, head wranglers, and trail wranglers should have appropriate leadership skills, a good understanding of your program and a good working knowledge of horsemanship skills. Their appearance should reflect the western image. All guides should have a current FIRST AID and CPR certification.

Consider their ability to:

1. Exhibit good horsemanship skills that reflect the ranch's instructional program and riding policy.
2. Be good examples in relation to apparel worn (boots with heels and long pants) and the operation's rules and regulations.
3. Handle horses on the ground and in the saddle.
4. Display concern for the well-being of the horse.
5. Be able to take control of a group no matter what skill level.
6. Display good judgment in dealing with guests and horses in all situations.
7. Endeavor to anticipate potentially dangerous situations on the trail.
8. Adapt emergency skills, as necessary, on the trail.

Guest Orientation

Many of your guests are novice riders, private horse owners or have an arena background and are not familiar with the trail riding experience. Orientation should be provided prior to a trail ride. This should include basic riding, risk management and safety skills that are needed to participate in the program being offered. Guest and horse safety should be presented and the top priority in any orientation.

Consider:

1. The rider should clearly understand their responsibility for their personal well-being and the well-being of others along with the welfare of their horse and understand that horseback riding involves inherent and other risk.
2. Trail rules should be stated clearly during general orientation and reinforced on actual trail rides.
3. Basic riding skills should be demonstrated and then practiced by the guests.
4. Mounting and dismounting should be demonstrated and supervised.
5. The rider should be aware of the variety of terrain they will be exposed to within the different rides.
6. Appropriate dress is related to rider safety (riding boots, long pants, and hat).
7. All carry-on objects should be secured or left behind.
8. All guests should understand the nature of the horse as a flight animal.
9. The role of the wrangler/guide should be included in any written materials and restated verbally within all levels of orientation.
10. Written material available prior to orientation may help in reinforcing basic skills, rules and regulations.
11. Orientation for children should be age appropriate so the child can understand the information listed above.
12. If helmets are offered/required, helmet fitting procedures should be posted and staff should be trained to conduct the procedure for different ages and sizes. Be aware some helmets have expiration dates.



Ride Management

The trail guide must provide ongoing supervision of the entire group as appropriate. The well-being of the group is a core focus. While on the trail, the guide should be in control and follow the ranch/program guidelines and expectations.

Consider:

1. Owners, managers, directors, and operators should know what the staff knows. You should be aware of all the procedures and skills that have been presented to your barn staff even if you are not directly dealing with this aspect of your operation.
2. Guides should be clearly established as the person in charge on the trail. This can be done through the guest orientation, written tips for the guests, and instructional rides. During any emergency, the guide is in charge even when there are medical personnel on the ride.
3. Instructions should be given at the beginning and throughout the ride as needed. Instruction should be consistent in all rides. The same phrases should be used so guests do not become confused.
4. Clearly define the different types of trail rides offered including: the terrain, pace of the ride (walk, trot, lope), water crossing and elevation gain and loss.
5. Decide the maximum number of riders allowed on the ride and the supervision required. The ratio of guide-to-guest may vary depending on the type of ride, the pace of the ride, the skill of the riders and your insurance provider.
6. The positioning of the horses must be clearly stated to the guest before the ride begins (nose to tail, one horse length between riders, spread out, side by side, off trail). The spacing of the horses should be clearly stated and monitored by the guide during the ride.
7. Rides should only travel at the level of the weakest rider within the group.
8. Before a ride leaves, guides should identify a guest in their mind who could assist them if an emergency should occur during the ride.
9. The use of cell phones being prohibited on all rides and in the barn area. They are a distraction to both horse and rider and may lead to an accident. Wranglers should reinforce this before the trail ride begins.
10. Wranglers should be looking behind themselves often, checking on their riders, gear, and horses. "Head on a swivel"
11. Wranglers should beware of the "slinky" effect in which the horses in the back tend to fall behind, then must trot or lope to catch up. Sometimes this occurs going downhill, which is difficult for beginner riders, or crossing an obstacle, causing some horses to lunge and unseat the rider. Consider moving this rider to the front of the ride to resolve this issue.
12. Wranglers should make use of the GPS function on smart phone trail applications to map trails for purposes of learning the ranches trail system, and reporting problems with trails via photo functions. (Smart phones do not work everywhere so have a backup plan)

Horse-Drawn Wagon/Sleigh

The use of a wagon or sleigh has a traditional place within our industry. However, due to all the elements involved in this activity the potential risk can be high. Safety and risk management issues should be monitored throughout the activity.

Consider:

1. Vehicle maintenance is critical. The wheels, brakes, neck yokes, eveners, single trees, and tongue should be checked and logged before each use.
2. The condition of the harness should be checked before each use.
3. The age of the team and their experience pulling are factors that should be evaluated very carefully.
4. The driver should have an appropriate knowledge of emergency procedures.
5. A safety orientation should be given to the guests prior to the activity and relay that the participant shares in the responsibility of their own well-being and the well-being of others on the trip, and that there are inherent and other risks.
6. Establish the maximum number of guests allowed on the vehicle being used.
7. The use of an out-rider may be a valuable risk management tool in many operations.

Create and maintain a log to document safety checks and repair work.



Arena Activities

Arenas are used to provide additional experiences for our guests. These may range from horsemanship clinics and gymkhanas to team penning. Each activity requires certain skills with the goal of providing a positive experience with appropriate consideration of risk management and safety issues.

Consider:

1. The guest should have a clear understanding of the skills needed to participate in the activity before the activity begins. They should also understand that they share in the responsibility for their own well-being and the well-being of the group, and that the activity includes inherent and other risks.
2. The rules should be clearly stated.
3. Identify the potential risks and dangers and how (if possible) to avoid them.
4. Endeavor to provide adequate supervision and management of the activity.
5. Activities should be selected considering their suitability for the participants, keeping in mind ability, horsemanship, and competitiveness.
6. The size of the arena may influence the activities offered at a ranch.

Working Cattle

When including guests in working cattle, the horse and rider need to be able to ride independently and negotiate the terrain that is being covered to get the job done.

Consider:

1. Horse selection is critical. It is extremely important that your staff endeavor to determine that the horse is not beyond the ability level of the rider.
2. The orientation should deal with riding skills needed for working with cow horses. The guest must understand that this differs from the traditional trail ride.
3. Discussing tips on cow behavior. The guests should also understand that they share in the responsibility for their own well-being and the well-being of the group, and that the activity includes inherent and other risks.
4. Try to work in small groups.
5. Realize that the work can get done tomorrow if the guests are having a difficult time completing the task at hand. Be flexible.
6. The guests and their well-being are very important.
7. Have an emergency plan in place and all staff clear about their role. This is important for all the activities listed above.
8. Skills such as branding, calving, vaccinating, and roping from a horse may be best handled by experienced staff.



Adaptive First Aid for the Trail Seminar

This seminar was developed to adapt the general FIRST AID & CPR certifications to the trail. **The knowledge gained through basic first aid certifications is only as good as our ability to apply it to the trail and the topography of our operations.** This is a critical piece of our Horse

Safety Program. Handling emergencies on the trail is perhaps a new experience for your staff. We need to give them the TOOLS that are needed to deal with any situation that may arise. Your ranch needs to practice adapting first aid and CPR skills and equipment to the trail.

Well-Packed First Aid Kit

1. What goes in the kit? Give the wranglers a list of what they need to carry.
2. Be able to locate needed items quickly. Cattle bags work great!
3. Go through kits with the wranglers to make sure they know the purpose of every item.

Standard Equipment List

1. Saddle, pad, halter, headstall, and bit.
2. Rope
3. Leatherman and/or knife
4. Fence tool
5. Slicker
6. How can these items be used on the trail? Demonstrate how they can be used. Ask your staff to come up with ideas.



Emergency Procedures on The Trail

1. There should be a clearly written procedure for general use in emergencies. This should be gone over with the staff, so they understand the procedure. A copy should be kept in their first aid kits.

Emergency Procedure

SAD

Secure the Scene

Horses safe & under control
People set up to be safe

Assess victim - consent

ABC - Airway

Breathing

Circulation

(check for gross
bleeds & swelling)

Alert and Oriented X

Time

Place

Name

Patient Assessment Summary

Delegate

Call for help

Who & What is needed

Prevention of Potential Accidents

1. You should have a skill assessment and know the previous experience level of each guest for the activity conducted.
2. Conduct a guest orientation with a skill and safety demonstration prior to any ride.
3. Provide instruction for the skills required for the level of rides and horse activities that are offered by the ranch/operation.
4. Evaluate the guest's ability to perform these skills.
5. Be aware of the physical strength and endurance that is necessary for the amount of riding a guest may participate in over the course of their stay.
6. Endeavor to adjust rides when it involves the well-being of the guests.

Practice Common Emergency Scenarios

1. No one knows how one will act in an emergency until it happens. However, if you have practiced handling potential accident situations, your wranglers will be more likely to respond quickly and stay in control.
2. Stage these scenarios while training on trails with your wranglers, or during trail clearing rides.
3. Offer "staff rides" for kitchen, maintenance, or housekeeping before your season begins to test your wrangler's abilities and preparedness for guests.
4. Make sure wranglers understand that there are several RIGHT ways to handle a variety of emergencies and injuries. Remind them to be prudent, in control, and to use common sense.

Emergency Exit Plan

1. All wranglers should know the fastest and most effective route back to the ranch from all trails. Remember the guests don't know the trails like staff.
2. Consider naming the trails, ridge lines, meadows.... whatever makes sense so you can locate the area of an accident quickly.
3. Smart Phones have GPS applications on which the entire ranches trail system can be mapped and shared. Consider doing this for your staff. They also have GPS location trackers that may help find lost staff or guests.
4. Communication devices may be of value where the terrain allows reception. Know what is available and establish a system for checking equipment; understand that wireless communication devices can be unreliable and inconsistent in wilderness and mountainous settings. If a communication device is being used, be aware of what is being said (assume the whole world is listening).
5. Prepare a back-up plan in case of equipment failure.

Neck, Back, and Spine Injuries

1. These are potentially extremely dangerous injuries if not handled correctly. Do not rely on what an individual was taught in a course you have not witnessed.
2. Practice checking someone for breathing and pulse without moving the victim. Wranglers need this picture in their mind.
3. If a victim needs to be moved because of potential danger, wranglers should know how to do it.
4. Practice the use of a backboard and other items you can improvise with to accomplish a ridge support.

Emergencies Related to the Location and Climate of Your Ranch

1. Are you crossing water, near a lake.... water rescue skills may need to be covered.
2. Are you riding at high altitude.... Dehydration and lightning should be addressed.



Follow Up with Entire Staff After an Emergency

1. Immediately gather information and handle emotional response.
2. Address the guests related to an accident with honest need to know information.
3. The rest of the staff should have clear information.
4. The wrangler(s) involved should fill out a report immediately.
5. Review the accident with all the wranglers; how it was handled pros and cons.
6. Could it have been prevented? If so, how? If not, why not? (Avoid admitting or assigning fault or blame; this can have legal ramifications. Provide objective and factual information, not subjective impressions or admissions of blame or fault.)

Liability

1. Your staff should have a clear understanding of what the term “liability” means related to the equine environment and the administration of First Aid and CPR.
2. Legal issues are important and dude ranches should work with legal counsel to understand applicable law and liability, review/develop contracts, participant agreements, and to consider issues relevant to their operation.





Risk Management Practices

These are the basic concepts that should be addressed when writing a risk management plan.

Site

The facility at which your program is conducted affects your ability to promote a safe environment for horses and riders.

1. Well maintained.
2. Appropriate mounting and dismounting area.
3. In good repair: arena, fences, hitching rails, stalls.
4. Rules posted.

Horses

1. Horse selection should be dictated by the riding program with consideration to the type of rider, terrain, etc.
2. Choose stock that is reliable and of appropriate disposition for the rider.
3. Assign horses to guests considering guest skill level and size of both horse and rider.
4. Take good overall care of the herd; well-fed, groomed, vet care.
5. Consider how stock is handled by staff.

Equipment & Tack

1. Equipment and tack should be properly maintained, as well as fit and be adjusted for the horse and rider.
2. Educate staff regarding the use and proper fit for horse and rider.
3. Establish a system to check equipment on a regular basis to include helmets.
4. Regular maintenance of tack.
5. **Create a maintenance log to document safety checks and repair work.**



Staffing

1. Barn managers, head wranglers, trail guides should have a good understanding of your horse program and a good working knowledge of horsemanship skills. They should have a current First Aid and CPR certification from a recognized certifying organization, such as WMI or the Red Cross.
2. Barn managers, wranglers, trail guides should be instructed in adapting First Aid and CPR to the trail.
3. Staff should be well groomed and present a western image.
4. Staff should be professional in dealing with guests and displaying good judgment.
5. Staff should be prepared to handle emergencies and potential injuries.

Riding Program

The guest should have a clear understanding of the riding program as presented through written literature, orientation, and instruction.

1. Ranch philosophy concerning its horse program.
2. Instruction, information on inherent and other risks and discussion of guests' personal responsibility to be provided to the guests.
3. Participant agreement signed by guest containing an acknowledgement and assumption of risks, a release provision and/or other appropriate information (developed by legal counsel considering your business and applicable law).
4. Appropriate clothing for riders.
5. Notify guest of the level of supervision by wrangler/guide. (guest to wrangler ratio).

Risk Management Overview

Risk is an inherent part of your horse programs. You should try to develop a risk management program and be sure it is made clear to your entire staff.

1. Educate the staff regarding your risk management plan or considerations. Horse related injury incidents very well may impact and/or involve many employees outside the wrangling crew.
2. The operations managers should consider including all staff in understanding the how's, where's, who to contact, and the chain of command.
3. How to react around the guest; how and when to maintain a professional composure around upset or possibly panic-stricken guest.
4. Consider and monitor the condition of facilities.
5. Carefully consider risk management and safety issues in your endeavor to provide a responsible experience for your guests.
6. Documentation of all incidents and accident reporting.
7. Assessment of rider ability, experience, and requisite level of supervision by wrangler/guide related to guest wrangler ratio.



Incident Management

Incident management is an inherent part of your horse program. You should try to develop an incident management program and be sure it is made clear to the entire staff. All staff should be educated regarding the incident management plan related to the injury of a guest in a horse accident. This may involve many employees outside the wrangling staff. The operations

managers should include all staff in understanding the how's, where's and the chain of command for handling an incident along with how they should react with professional composure around upset and possibly panicked guests. The documentation of all incidents needs to be reported with consistent and accurate information.

Front End of Incident Management:

1. This refers to what can be done to set the stage and to help with prevention prior to an incident even occurring.
 - a. Does the recreating public really understand the nature of inherent risk related to the horse industry?
 - b. The nature of the horse.
 - c. The terrain they will be riding in.
2. The skills that are needed.
 - a. Procedures should be in place to effectively manage risk.
 - b. A thorough liability waiver including an assumption of risk should be in place.
 - c. Instruction, information on inherent and other risks along with discussion of guests' personal responsibility to be provided to guests.
3. Assessment of the rider's ability, experience, and requisite level of supervision by wrangler.
4. Marketing information should not say or imply that guests are guaranteed they will be totally safe.



Back-End of Incident Management:

1. Immediately handling an incident after it has occurred (suing is usually related to an emotional response).
2. Assessment of incident: the scene, the injured guest and equipment to be used.
3. Follow established emergency procedure in place.
 - a. Effectively managing the client's emotions and expectations.
 - b. Listen to the guests and what they say.
 - c. Put yourself in their shoes.
 - d. Express genuine sorrow and sympathy.
 - e. Validate their feelings of fear.
 - f. Provide comfort.
 - g. Provide information unsolicited.
4. Be first contact with the family.
 - a. After the initial care documentation should be completed and placed on file.
 - b. Liability waiver and assumption of risk forms should be completed.
 - c. Accurate, thorough explanations should be included.
 - d. Just the facts.
5. Witness statements can be obtained, just the facts and placed on file.
6. Follow up with guests soon.
7. Be responsive.
8. Continue to engage.
9. Check in.
10. Show you care.

For more information about
Incident Management contact:

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**- Example -
ACCIDENT REPORT**

DATE OF ACCIDENT: _____

DATE REPORTED: _____

LOCATION: _____

TIME OCCURRED: _____

WITNESSES:

(GUESTS) _____

(STAFF) _____

NAME OF HORSE: _____

LEAD GUIDE: _____

NAME OF GUEST: _____

DRAG GUIDE: _____

NUMBER OF GUESTS ON RIDE (OR AT ACTIVITY INVOLVED): _____

NATURE OF INJURY (GIVE DETAILED DESCRIPTION): _____

DISPOSITION OF INJURED PARTY (FIRST AID ADMINISTERED AT SCENE OF ACCIDENT. WAS INJURED PARTY TAKEN TO HOSPITAL OR DOCTOR?): _____

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF ACCIDENT: (USE REVERSE SIDE IF NECESSARY) _____

COMMENTS: _____

Acceptance of Responsibility

Acceptance of Responsibility is signed by the owner, manager, director, or operator of the trail riding program. It is YOUR responsibility to review your existing program. The DRA relies on the integrity of our certified members. Your signature and acceptance of this certification is a commitment to this program and to the well-being of your guests.

You have agreed to:

1. Review your ranch's current program regarding all items covered in the seminars that apply to your operation.
2. Fill out and RETURN the DRA Yearly Safety Survey. Review and consider the Horse Safety & Risk Management Practices annually, before the beginning of opening season, as promoted through the DRA Horse Safety & Adaptive First Aid for the Trail programs. This is a three-year program. To stay current, a ranch must attend the updated seminars offered at the DRA convention or at a designated renewal seminar.

The following pages contain suggestions and samples, for your information. Understand that these are suggestions only, and that each ranch may vary in its approach to these issues depending upon their unique operation and applicable state or local law or regulation.

Helpful Information:

Leave No Trace Principals

1. KNOW BEFORE YOU GO
 - This land is really your land. Learn about and respect the spaces we all own, share, and sing about it.
 - Stay back from the pack. Find your way to less visited and off-peak destinations to minimize down time and maximize your connection with special places.
 - Bring along reusable water bottles or hot drink tumblers to limit waste.
2. STICK TO TRAILS
 - With 39,000 marked trails and 13,000 designated campsites, there is no need to venture beyond. By sticking to these areas and camping at least 200 feet from lakes, rivers, and streams, you're helping natural areas stay natural.
 - Even though shortcuts can be tempting, please don't take them. A few extra strides on the path will protect plants and the homes of the true locals.

3. LEAVE IT AS YOU FIND IT

- Leave plants, rocks and historical items as you find them, so others experience the joy of discovery.
- Any of our 750 different species of wildflowers will live forever in a photo. Snap away, but only with a camera.
- The western states are beautiful all on their own. Building structures or campsites on public land isn't cool. Keep it pristine for everyone to enjoy.
- Treat all living things with respect. Carving or hacking plants and trees may kill or disfigure them.

4. TRASH THE TRASH

- Pack it in, pack it out. Or pick it up to leave a place better than you found it. Put litter, even crumbs, peels, and cores in your nearest waste/recycling bin.
- Wash yourself, your dog or whatever else needs cleaning at least 200 feet from waterways and use biodegradable soap. A bubble bath is no treat for fish.

5. BE CAREFUL WITH FIRE

- Keep campfires small and manageable to avoid starting a wildfire.
- When putting out a fire, water it until you can handle the embers. Never let a fire burn unattended.
- Take care when smoking. Always put cigarettes out completely, and don't leave butts behind.
- Always check for local fire restrictions.

6. KEEP WILDLIFE WILD

- There are tens of thousands of furry, scaly, and feathered creatures. To keep them—and you—safe, don't approach them.
- It is not adorable to feed wild animals. You could alter natural behaviors, exposing them to predators or even euthanasia.
- Keep your furry buddies leashed when enjoying dog-friendly trails and pack out their waste. All the way to a trashcan.

7. SHARE OUR TRAILS & PARKS

- Chances are you're not in nature to people watch, so try out the lesser-known paths and sites.
- Silence your cell phone before stepping into nature and speak softly without using the speaker function.
- Be considerate when passing others on the trail and yield to the uphill hiker and biker—they need the momentum.
- Listen to nature. Keep your voice and music soft so all can enjoy the peace that nature can bring.

Well-Packed First Aid Kit should have the following items:

- Emergency procedure
- Aspirin (or substitute)
- Antacid
- Antihistamine (Benadryl)
- Band-aids
- Butterfly Band-aids
- Compress bandage
- Gauze pads 4x4
- Neosporin Ointment
- Roller gauze
- Latex free gloves
- Anti-bacterial
- Scissors
- Sam splint
- Mylar blanket (space blanket)
- Tape 1" & 2"
- Towelettes
- Triangular Bandage
- Additional items required by special guest conditions.
- A pen, marker, and paper to document any incident.
- *Check your first aid kit at the beginning of each week. It is YOUR responsibility to ALWAYS have a stocked kit with you! It is a liability issue. Keep a record of the times you have checked your first aid kit.
- **Get in the habit of IMMEDIATELY replacing what you have used.

A Risk Management Program or Plan should consider, among other things:

- Horse Program and Philosophy
- Participant Agreement containing an acknowledgement and assumption of risks, a release and indemnity agreement and or other relevant provisions, developed by informed legal counsel.
- Guest Information Form
- Guest Orientation
- Facility Orientation
- Staff Training Procedures
- Staff Certification Requirements
- Emergency Procedures
- Incident/Accident Report
- The Chain of Command (who is in charge and where)



Practice Emergency Scenarios

1. A small ride with 3 guests and one wrangler. One of the guests needs a mounting block to get on or off and is a very nervous beginner rider. The ride is coming back to the barn after a successful ride. They are within 5 minutes of the barn and a storm rolls in. The nervous rider becomes more nervous and wants to put on her slicker. The single wrangler decides to accommodate the nervous rider, tries to put the slicker on the rider without dismounting. The wind picks up, slicker blows, horse spooks, nervous rider comes off, that horse bumps into another one and a second rider comes off. Two riders are down with rib and lower back pains and the third rider is under control and calm.
2. You are on an all-day ride with six riders several miles from the ranch. You are in a wooded area. The wind picks up and the horses are on edge. Suddenly you hear a cracking sound and see a tree coming down. The horses spook and move every direction. Two riders come off. One is shaken up but appears to have gotten the wind knocked out of him. Another rider hits their head hard on the ground. Is conscious but out of it. Horses are dancing around and guests are rattled.
3. You are on a kid's ride crossing a meadow, approaching a fence with a gate you must cross through. As you approach the fence you notice a golden eagle perch on the fence. You are turning to stop the ride about to address the situation that the eagle is present, and the eagle takes off toward the ride. The horses instantly spook at the flapping wings. The first horse bolts forward through the gate and takes off at a lope. One little girl begins screaming and the horse steps to the side and is extremely nervous. You have a trail wrangler with you on this ride but his horse has reacted to the eagle and starts crow hopping!
4. It is the last day of the week. Rides are leaving the lunch picnic and returning home. You are guiding a family of 4, all accomplished riders. Because all the riders are confident and capable at the lope you are doing a loping exercise in a line through a clearing. The least capable rider is the mother, so she is riding behind you. Her cowboy hat comes off and flies back and away, spooking her son's horse near the back of the line. As the horse shies the 13-year-old boy comes off and hits his head against the ground as he tumbles. Everyone comes to a stop, there is a loose horse, a hurt and crying boy on the ground and a panicked and guilt-ridden mother. What do you do?
5. On a beautiful afternoon ride two hours away from the barn a guest horse stumbles and throws the rider forward. She stays on but her head collided with the horse's rising neck as the horse was recovering from the stumble. She has no complaints of pain, but her nose is bleeding profusely. What do you do?

INSTRUCTIONAL RIDES

Orientation Ride:

1. Introduce rider to their horse.
2. Adjust tack to fit horse and rider.
3. Reinforce skills and techniques introduced in the orientation.
4. The following skills should be practiced:
 - a) Correct posture in the saddle.
 - b) Position of the toes and heels.
 - c) Holding the reins.
 - d) Starting, stopping and backing up the horse.
 - e) Turning to both sides.
 - f) Rubbing the horse on the neck for a reward.
 - g) Appropriate distance from the horse in front.
 - h) Crossing the road.
 - i) Going up & down hills.
 - j) Keeping horse from eating.
 - k) Reading horses body language.
5. What signals should be expected from the wrangler? i.e. raising hand to signal stop.
6. Repeat common instructional phrases.
7. Emphasize ALWAYS staying alert! It is a fact that most accidents happen at a walk.
8. Explain why we ride in a line, including loping.
9. Urge people to ride at the level they feel comfortable at and not what friends or other family members attempt to talk them into.
10. Remind them to keep all items secure.

Loping Instruction:

1. 20-30 minutes should be spent practicing skills in assigned area.
2. When you feel they are ready as a group to move to the trail to practice skills, go ahead.
3. Make all instruction clear! Demonstrate as much as possible.
4. Look at each person individually.
5. DON'T BE AFRAID TO TELL A GUEST THEY ARE NOT READY TO LOPE!
6. Emphasize body position.
7. Give tips on how to transition from walk to trot to lope. BALANCE.
8. Do 3-5 short lopes. Stop to answer questions and give additional hints between loping segments.
9. Explain why you do not lope downhill.
10. What is a moderate ride? Adventure ride?

WRANGLER EMERGENCY PROCEDURE

1. All guests dismount immediately and hold lead rope for their horse.
2. Evaluate the scene.
 - a) Potential danger to victim.
 - b) Potential danger to other members of party.
3. Evaluate victim.
 - a) Life threatening injury? (ABC)
 - b) Possible neck, back, or spine injury....DO NOT MOVE VICTIM !
4. Call ranch for help or 911 if the victim is unconscious.
 - a) If there is a certified first aid individual in group they may assist (you are in charge).
 - b) If cell does not work, secure the scene and go to nearest phone or back to ranch depending on location. Designate a guest to be in charge while you are gone.
 - c) Stay calm, do not charge back to the ranch, stay in control and be safe.
5. DO NOT LEAVE THE SCENE for help until you have a clear picture of what you are dealing with.
6. Water Rescue
 - a) Everyone out of the water immediately and dismount.
 - b) ENTER WATER AS A LAST RESORT.
 - c) Tell victim, "Feet down stream on your butt, head up".
 - d) Tell victim, "Swim diagonally toward shore".
 - e) Move below victim on shore, find a secure position and throw rope to the victim.
 - f) Monitor for shock, remove any wet clothing possible and keep victim warm.

EQUIPMENT:

Charged cell phone (yellow box) First Aid Kit

Rope

Fencing Tool

Knife

LOCATION OF NEAREST PHONE (examples below):

All Day Ride---Wally's place.

Duck Lake Area---Back to ranch

Cowboy Canyon---Ranch at the end of the road.

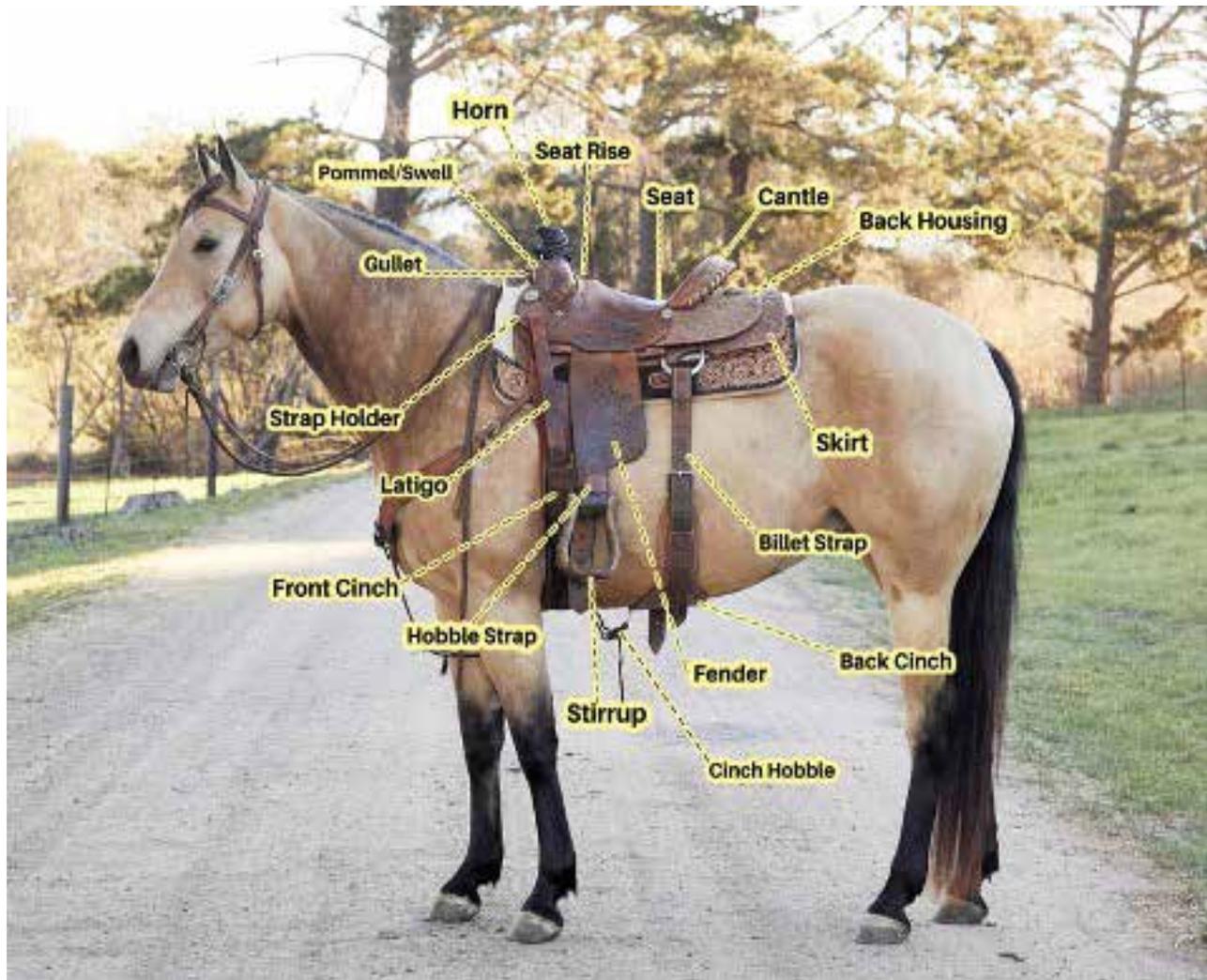
Parshall Divide---PI

Spa Ride---The HS Springs Resort

****FILL OUT ACCIDENT REPORT AND TURN IN TO PROPER PERSON**

INSTRUCTIONAL HORSEMANSHIP "PHRASES"
TO BE USED AT EVERY OPPORTUNITY
ON ALL RIDES !!

1. Posture----sit TALL in the saddle.
2. Maintain balance at all times.
3. Heels down, toes up.
4. Loose reins accept when using reins to signal a command.
5. Legs and feet relaxed with slight pressure in stir ups unless signaling a command.
6. Pressure/Release:
 LIGHT PRESSURE with reins to signal a command.
 IMMEDIATE RELEASE when the horse responds.
7. Come ALIVE with your feet. BUMP with feet or calves to change pace. (walk/trot/lope).
8. Stay ALERT at all times and at ALL PACES.
9. Keep a safe distance from the horse in front to allow for sudden change in pace or horse behavior.
10. READ your horses body language (ears,breathing,body tension).
11. Eliminate any thing that may cause your horse to spook or shy. i.e. items that may come loose.
12. Lean body weight forward while going up a hill and back when going down.
13. Never trot or lope going down hill.
14. Reward your horse by "rubbing" on neck at every opportunity.
15. Respect the horse; size, strength, and nature.



Western saddles all have different variations of these seventeen parts: saddle horn, seat rise, seat, cantle, back housing, skirt, billet strap, back cinch, fender, cinch hobbie, stirrup, hobbie strap, front cinch, latigo, strap holder, gullet, and pommel/swell.

The parts shown in the above diagram are the most common features every saddle will have, no matter what type of saddle. Each specific piece may vary slightly, depending on the event or purpose of the saddle, but will always be there in some form. Note that the back cinch is an optional piece of tack that may not be present on every saddle but can always be added if desired.

EXAMPLES OF TRAIL LANDMARKS

Make sure EVERYONE on the ranch knows the trail landmarks.

SOUTH OF THE RANCH CROSSING COUNTY RD. EAST:

1. Devil's Ditch
2. Clear Crossing
3. Coyote Flats
4. Rocky Ridge
5. Pine Meadow
6. Eagle's Nest
7. Coyote Gulch

EAST OF RANCH:

1. Duane's Rd
2. Saddle Ridge
3. Saddle Ridge Over-look
4. Pinnacle Peak
5. Spook Rock Tr.
6. Cousin's Tr.
7. Stark Tr.
8. Duck Pond

RANCH PROPERTY:

1. BLJ upper pasture
2. Spring Pasture
3. Ranch Pasture
4. River House Pasture
5. River Tr.
6. Willow's Tr.
7. Cottonwood Tr.
8. Ranch Crossing
9. Barn Crossing

SOUTHWEST OF RANCH:

1. Elk Ridge
2. Gorge Crossing

WEST OF RANCH WILLIAMS FORK RIVER:

1. Homestead Tr.
2. Knob Hill
3. Williams Fork River Tr.
4. Cliff Ride
5. West Ridge
6. Apache junction
7. Grandview
8. Sand Dunes
9. Beaver Dam Crossing
10. Grass Meadow Crossing

NORTH OF RANCH PARSHALL DIVIDE:

1. Parshall Tr.
2. Divide Tr.
3. Steep Tr.
4. Turning Bear Pt.
5. Bushwackers Climb
6. Paradise Rd.
7. Tower Tr.
8. Cowboy Canyon Tr.
9. Byers Canyon
10. Indian Pass
11. Parshall Overlook
12. Corral Creek Overlook

BACKCOUNTRY SAFETY REMINDERS

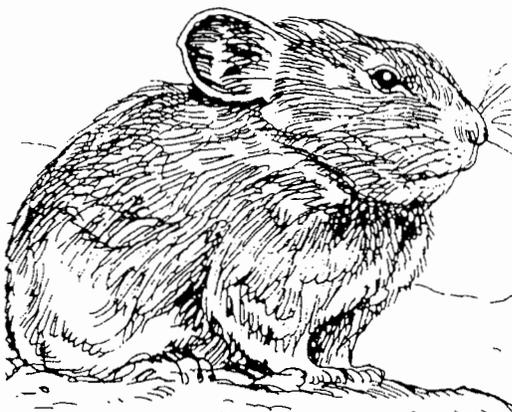
from the National Lightning Safety Institute
www.lightningsafety.com

THUNDERSTORMS

Lightning is capricious and unpredictable. The danger can come upon you quickly. There is no defense against a "first strike." In most cases thunder is a very good advanced warning of lightning. Hear thunder? --- the associated lightning is within 6-8 miles so **Get Defensive Immediately**. See lightning but do not hear thunder? ---- the threat is farther away than your hearing range.

Safety means--- **AVOID** the high ground + **AVOID** metallic objects + **AVOID** solitary trees + **AVOID** water. **SEEK** cluster of small trees or bushes + **SEEK** lower elevations + **SEEK** safety inside a vehicle + **Separate** from others to reduce multiple injuries. Wait a minimum of 30 minutes before resuming outdoor activities after the last observed thunder or lightning.

Lightning victims' survival rate is 90%+. People struck by lightning do not retain an electrical charge so start CPR immediately. Keep the victim warm. Treat burns.



HYPOTHERMIA

Hypothermia is the lowering of the body's core temperature to a level which impairs normal muscle and brain activities. It is a serious and sometimes fatal condition.

Hypothermia is generally brought on by exposure to cold. The windy, often wet, conditions of high elevations can produce hypothermia at temperatures as warm as 50 degrees F (10 degrees C).

Preparation is the best prevention for hypothermia. Carry adequate equipment for rapid weather changes. Always include rain gear, extra clothing for layering, a hat, and gloves.

Watch for these signs of hypothermia in yourself and others in your party:

- drowsiness
- loss of judgement or coordination
- reduced dexterity
- slurred speech
- uncontrolled shivering

If these signs appear, begin immediate treatment. Eliminate exposure to cold and wet conditions, move out of the wind, add layers of warm, dry clothing, and begin to rewarm the individual by administering warm, non-alcoholic liquids.

SUNBURN

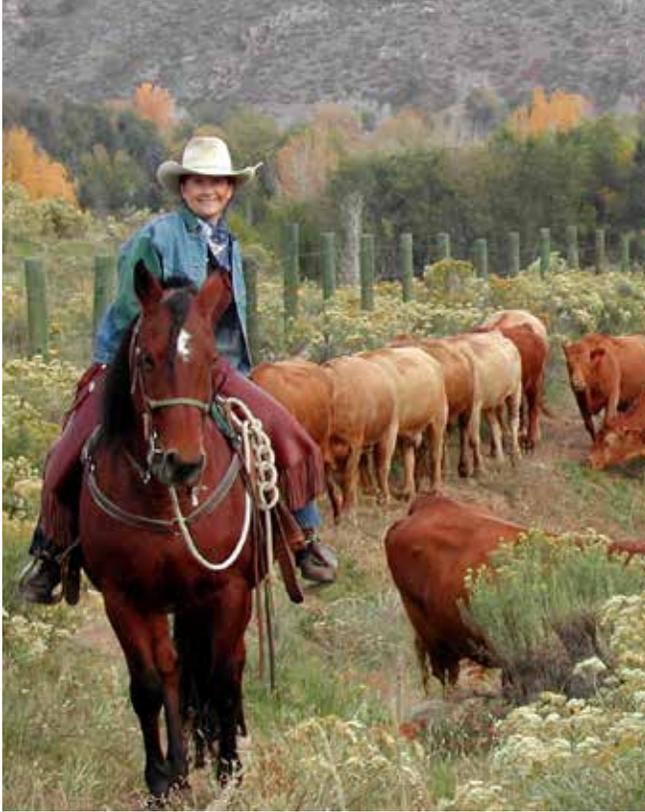
Ultraviolet radiation is more intense at high elevation. It is much easier to get severely sunburned at high elevation than at sea level.

Protect skin with long sleeves and pants, a hat, and frequent applications of sunblock. Protect the eyes with sunglasses. Keep a watchful eye on infants and children as even slight redness can indicate potential sunburn.

DEHYDRATION

The low humidity and high winds common at high elevations can cause the body to dehydrate.

Dehydration can increase the risk of fatigue, hypothermia, and altitude sickness. Drinking plenty of water is the best protection against dehydration. Take precautions against "hidden dangers" like giardia when obtaining water from streams.



Equine Health Assessment and First Aid

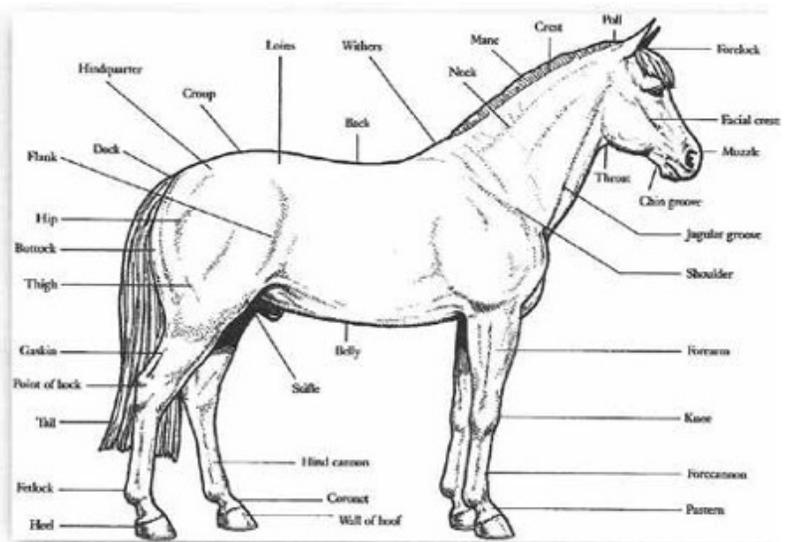
To recognize the abnormal, you must know the normal. The vital signs of the horse are as follows:

- | | | |
|---|---------------------------|-------------------------------|
| T | Resting temperature: | 99 - 101.5 degrees Fahrenheit |
| P | Resting pulse rate: | 28 - 40 beats per minute |
| R | Resting Respiratory rate: | 12 - 20 breaths per minute |

these values increase with exercise.

- | | | |
|-----|------------------------|---------------------------------|
| MM | Mucous membrane color: | pink |
| CRT | Capillary filltime: | less than 2 seconds |
| | Gut Sounds | present, listen for 60 seconds. |

Wranglers and trail guides should know the parts of the horse, so that they can accurately describe an injury when one occurs. They should be familiar with the attitude and posture of healthy horses, so that they recognize signs of pain or distress. Changes in posture, sudden unwillingness to move, or unusual restlessness may all be signs of a problem.



Signs of Pain or Distress

Horses communicate their discomfort in a variety of ways:

- Pain face (grimace): ears low and back, eyes tense and staring, dilated nostrils Pawing or stamping.
- Switching tail
- Throwing head repeatedly Sweating
- Unusual posture
- Reluctance to move.
- Restless pacing
- NOT snatching grass
- No gut sounds.

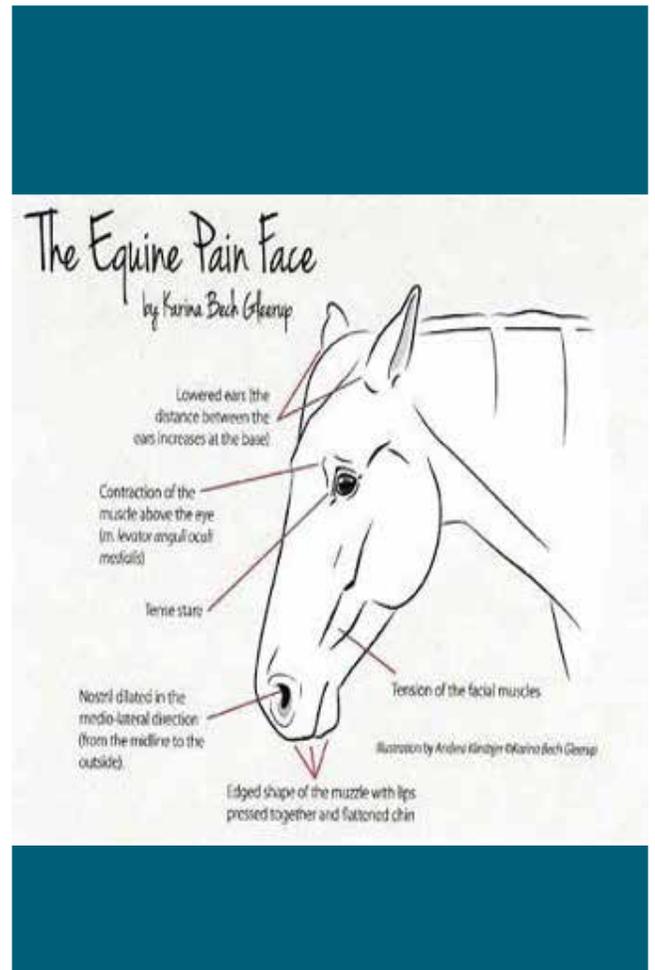
The equine pain face is also referred to as a grimace; There are online photos that illustrate the Grimace Scale.

Horses should be assessed every time they are tacked up, simply by quickly running your hands over them, from head to tail. Note any heat, swelling or pain (signs of inflammation).

Small issues are addressed before becoming big issues. A quick check when tack is moved at the end of work is also routine.

Any problems found should be described as mild, moderate, or severe in nature. Mild problems (a small scrape) do not change the horse's attitude or behavior.

Moderate problems (a cut causing swelling and ameness) interfere with normal function. Severe problems (broken bone) cause big changes in behavior and need attention as soon as possible.



Nose to Tail Routine Check

Nose: Sores? Cuts? Swelling? Nasal discharge: color, consistency, odor Cough present? Dry? Productive?

Eyes: Swelling? Redness? Discharge: amount, color, consistency.

Neck and Shoulders: Bites, scrapes, punctures, soreness?

Front legs: Punctures, scrapes? Tendons smooth, hot, swollen?

Feet: Easily pick up feet? Shoes loose? Clean out mud & debris. **Cinch Area:** Hair thinning, rub sores?

Back and Belly: Sensitive to brushing or saddling? Insect bites?

Hips and back legs: Sores, sensitivity, wounds, swelling? Clean the feet.

Tail and Hind End: Clean? Dirty from loose stool?



Ranch Veterinary Supplies

Your medicine cabinet at the ranch should be stocked with input from your veterinarian. She or he will want to know what you have on hand and may have specific directions on when and how to use it. In general, speak to your vet before starting treatment. Describe the problem, discuss your options, and agree on a plan. For the good of your horses, you must have a relationship with a veterinary practice based on mutual respect and trust.

Ointments/Creams You should have antibiotic ointment or cream; some are less irritating than others. Talk to your vet!

Zinc Oxide Ointment For sunburn on bald faces. (Toxic if the dog eats it.)

Eye wash Fly/UV mask
For sunburn, flies, and injured eyes.

Flunixin (Banamine) For colic; record TPR and call your vet if possible before using. This drug can mask signs and make assessment more difficult. A dose may be repeated in 12 hours, more frequent dosing is NOT better and may cause adverse effects. The paste form is safer and dosed by weight. The injectable is usually 10cc per 1000 lb. horse intravenously (IV). Accidental injection into the carotid artery may be fatal. Intramuscular (IM) injection sometimes causes severe infection.

Bute For musculoskeletal pain including arthritis. Dose ranges from 1-4 grams per day. Adverse effects may include gastric ulcers or life-threatening colitis.

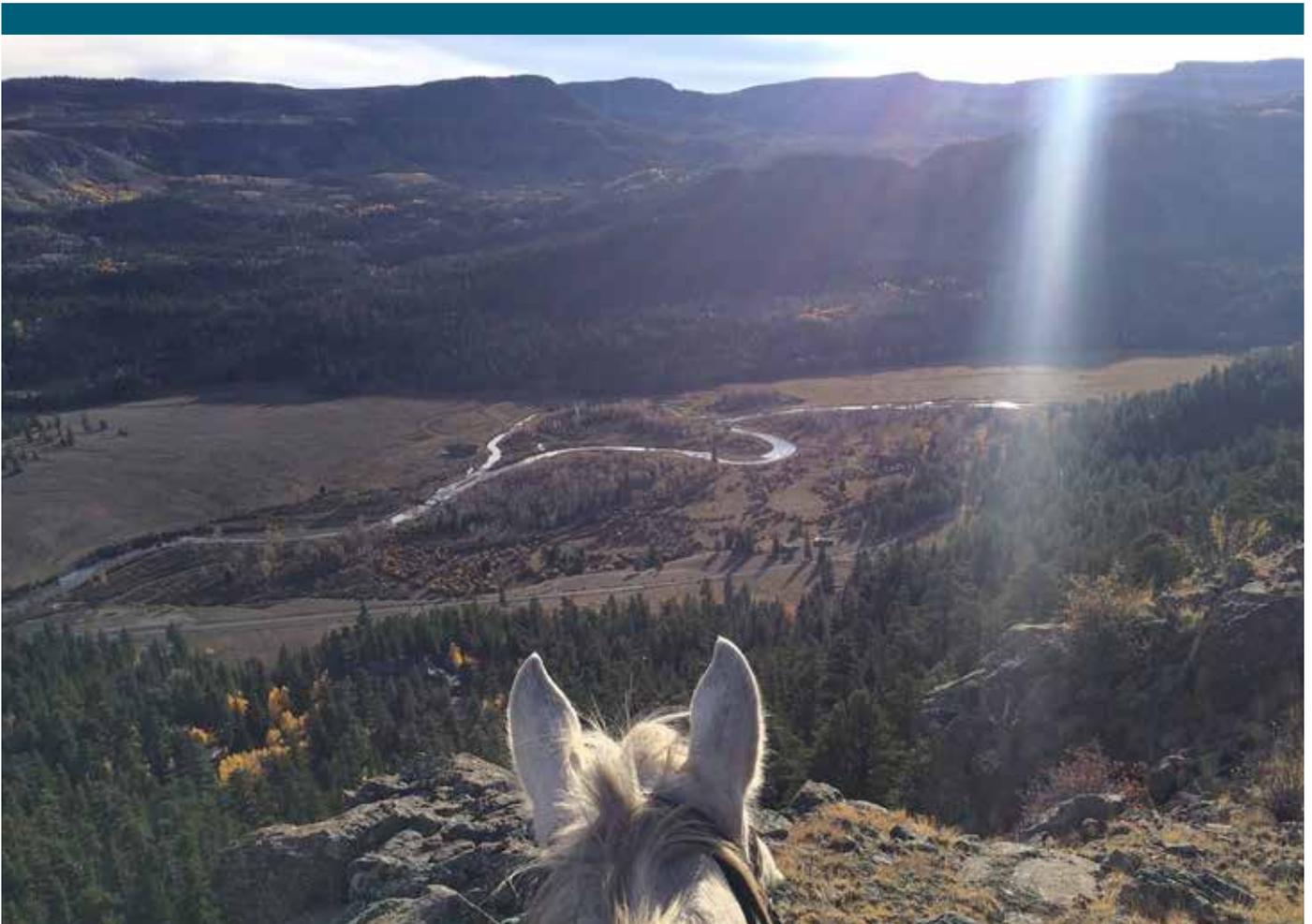
Oral antibiotic Sulfa Trimethoprim antibiotic is available as 960mg. tablets, usual dose is 10-15 tabs once or twice a day, depending on the problem and size of the horse. It also comes as a powder, usually 2 scoops per day for a 1100 lb horse.

Others You will accumulate meds as your horses develop problems. Get your veterinarian's advice when a new problem crops up. If a similar problem occurs, call your vet to describe the problem and make sure it's safe to treat similarly.

First Aid Kit on the Trail

The most important item for supplying first aid is a calm brain that's able to make a methodical assessment of the problem. Is the problem mild, moderate or severe? Must it be addressed immediately? Can the horse continue the ride, or should he head home?

- A small number of useful items can easily be carried on rides:
- Duct tape
- Hoof pick with a stiff brush
- A few Telfa pads (easy to keep clean in a baggie) A sheet cotton, rolled up; or a roll of cast padding Vetrap 4"
- Water bottle and clean wrap to be used in a pinch to clean wounds
- Cell phone to take pictures, take notes of TPR etc.



Injuries, Illnesses and Other Nasties

Eyes

Normal eyes are open with occasional blinking. Pupils are equal in diameter. There may be a small amount of clear or grayish discharge.

A constantly blinking, squinting or closed eye is abnormal, and probably painful. Yellow or green discharge, redness or cloudiness of the eye should trigger a call to your vet.

Swollen lids could be a bruised lid or an allergic reaction (especially if both eyes).

A veterinary exam is always recommended with eye problems; they can get worse quickly.

Colic

Colic is defined as abdominal pain. Usually, it is caused by gastrointestinal upset, but inflammation or infection of other organs is possible. Colicky horses are uncomfortable and may exhibit flank watching/biting, kicking at the abdomen, rolling, or pawing. It's helpful to document the time the problem started, and the signs exhibited. Check the horse's pulse, gum color, CRT (Capillary Refill Time) and gut sounds if possible.

Every colicky horse is potentially dangerous. They may suddenly go down and roll; so, on a ride, the rider must get off. Loosen the cinch or remove tack if the problem is severe.

Any episode of colic may end badly, so call the vet to discuss what's happening, and to give a heads up in case it doesn't resolve. It is VERY helpful if you can tell your vet the horse's pulse, gum color, gut sounds and other signs.

***Flunixin (Banamine) is a nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drug (NSAID) that helps to relieve visceral pain. Evaluate your horse BEFORE giving it, as it can cover up changes in TPR. If there's a vet on the way, they probably do not want it given until after their exam.



Choke

Choke in horses is the term used for an esophageal obstruction. Something the horse swallowed is stuck in the esophagus instead of going into the stomach.

The horse keeps producing saliva and swallowing it, until it builds up and comes out his nose.

Typically, a horse with choke has his head down, with green slime pouring out his nostrils.

Professional help is needed as soon as possible; prolonged obstructions can cause scarring and constriction of the esophagus.

Your vet will probably pass a tube to clear the obstruction, as well as give medicines to relax the muscles and reduce inflammation.

Allergic Reactions/Stings

Insect stings and bites can produce swollen eyelids or lips; hives may also develop. If it is a mild reaction (the horse's attitude and behavior are normal), the horse may recover in 24 hours with no specific treatment. If it is more severe, your vet may prescribe an antihistamine or steroid medication.

Wounds

Assessment of a wound includes its location, size, depth, and amount of bleeding. Abrasions (scrapes) are superficial wounds that do not go through the skin. Lacerations penetrate through the skin and may go into deeper tissues.

Puncture wounds are made by pointed objects that penetrate the skin and possibly deeper tissues.

Tetanus vaccination is strongly recommended for any puncture or laceration.

Mild: no lameness, no signs of distress, little bleeding

Moderate: large size but horse not distressed, slight lameness/discomfort, no excessive bleeding

Severe: Horse is distressed, markedly lame or unwilling to move, and/or excessive bleeding

LIMB WOUNDS usually benefit from bandaging to keep it clean and to control bleeding. With deep wounds, the horse should be evaluated by a veterinarian for possible suturing or further care. Confinement in a small pen during recovery helps healing without further injury.

HEEL BULB LACERATIONS should be tightly wrapped to limit the motion of the injured area. Deep ones often benefit from a foot cast, which is most effective when applied soon after the injury. Call your vet!

UPPER BODY PUNCTURES/LACERATIONS often look terrible but heal well. Assess your horse for signs of pain. As soon as possible, wash the wound thoroughly; flushing debris out of it (consider hosing). There are many good compounds sold for wound care, use whatever your vet recommends. (Some traditional ointments delay wound healing). Any large or deep wounds should be examined by a vet for specific care. Daily wound care should continue until it is totally healed.

**Always consult your veterinarian for advice
on care and treatment.**

Lameness

Sudden lameness could be resolved by picking a stone out of a hoof, so be ready to quickly examine a foot. If a shoe is thrown, some horses are fine, others are sore. If a shoe comes halfway off, it needs to be totally removed right away. Letting the horse try to walk could result in part of the hoof being torn off. Send someone for equipment if needed. Be able to make a duct tape boot if needed. The most common cause of sudden lameness is a hoof abscess. Check the foot for heat and use hoof testers to find sensitivity. Your farrier may be able to locate and relieve the problem. Soaking the foot in warm water and Epsom salts may help an abscess to break and heal.

Lameness from an injury may resolve with a few days of rest. More chronic lameness may have any number of causes, from tendon strain to arthritis. If the problem doesn't get better with rest, or recurs after work, a veterinary lameness exam is indicated.

***Phenylbutazone (Bute) is a nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drug (NSAID) that relieves musculoskeletal pain. Doses range from 1 to 4 grams per day; adverse effects may include gastric ulcers or colitis. Check with your vet for specific dose and duration when treating a horse. Do NOT combine with Flunixin

Hoof Abscess

is a localized bacterial infection in the sensitive structure of the hoof, or in layman's terms, an abscess is the hoof's way of getting rid of dead cells from a trauma. An abscess can develop for many reasons.

Some common causes can be:

- Introduction of a foreign body (a pebble, for example)
- Shoeing nails hitting too close to the laminae, thus allowing bacteria to enter.
- Some other kind of trauma to the sensitive layers of the hoof, such as going from shod to barefoot without proper preparation.
- Reaction to bruising.
- Laminitis
- Contraction of the heels
- Going from dry to wet weather conditions.

Whatever the reason for the development of the abscess, it is important to know that since the hoof cannot expand, the increased pressure of the pus collecting within the hoof capsule, created as the body reacts to the infection, causes what can be significant pain and lameness to the horse.

Diagnoses: Abscesses can be very tricky to diagnose. One day horse is sound next day they are three-legged lame and barely putting weight on the troubled hoof.

Treatment: soaking the entire hoof in 1 cup Epsom salt and approximately 2 gallons of warm water for 20 minutes daily will help drain infection.

Hoof packing for infections along with a tape boot in between soaks can be a big help. A rubber fitted special boot works well too.

Broken Bone *Send for assistance; do not try to move the horse. *

A broken bone causes a sudden, severe lameness with signs of extreme distress. There may be a painful grimace, sweating, increased pulse, and respiration. Usually, the horse is unwilling to move and may go down if forced to do so. This is an emergency - call the vet now.

Kick Injuries

Next to running away, kicking is a horse's best natural defense. Some kicks are witnessed, but many are not. If a horse is suddenly lame, stiff, sore or reluctant to move be sure to examine him closely. You may find a scrape over a sore area, or no mark at all. Kicks can bruise muscle or bone, or even fracture a bone. Look for (actually feel for) heat, swelling and tenderness.

Treatment includes cold hosing, rest and anti-inflammatories (Bute). Mild, superficial kicks may recover quickly. Bruised muscle tissue may take several weeks to heal. Kicks to bones or joints could take months. Like injured people, horses may need extended physical therapy to return to work. Range of motion exercises and a gradually increasing exercise program may be prescribed.

Extreme Distress

Rarely a horse suffers a catastrophic medical event such as a heart problem or seizure. Sudden blowing, extreme distress, dripping sweat are signs of an emergency. A collapsing or seizing horse is dangerous. Get your rider off and keep everyone at a safe distance. Call your vet - now.

Strangles

Strangles is a contagious bacterial disease caused by *Streptococcus equi*. It is an upper respiratory disease-causing fever, a runny nose, trouble swallowing and swollen lymph nodes around the throat. It can be serious, even deadly to young horses. Older horses usually have milder disease. Sick horses can remain contagious for up to 6 weeks, and there are some horses that appear well but are carriers.

Sick horses spread the disease by direct contact and by contaminated feeders, water troughs, buckets, fences and trailers. ISOLATE sick horses.

The incubation period is 3 to 14 days; so, all new horses should be quarantined for a minimum of 2 weeks. QUARANTINE NEW HORSES FOR 2 WEEKS!!!

Pastern Dermatitis (Scratches, Grease Heel)

Pastern dermatitis is not a single disease, but a skin reaction that could be from several causes. Bacteria, fungi, mites, ultraviolet light and immune-mediated problems can all result in similar appearing skin. The mild form (scratches) has some hair loss, inflamed skin, flakiness, and scabs. It can be itchy or painful. A more exudative form (grease heel) is rawer with redder, thicker skin and oozing under scabs. Some horses are extremely painful and require sedation to treat.

General treatment includes clipping the area, so it will dry out and can be cleaned and medicated. Many different medications have been used successfully, which means none is perfect. Daily cleaning with an antiseptic and keeping the horse out of the mud are key. Persistent or severe cases may require a veterinarian's exam and recommendations.

Thrush

Thrush is a bacterial infection of the frog. The bottom of the hoof has a moist black exudate that has a distinctive foul odor. Severe cases can be painful.

Affected horses may need a farrier to trim dead tissue so that the foot can be cleaned and medicated daily. Severe cases may benefit by going barefoot and resting. Medications that dry out the area and kill bacteria are used, including iodine, chlorhexidine or copper sulfate.

Rabies

Rabies is a viral infection that can infect all warm-blooded animals. It is almost always fatal in humans, if exposure is not recognized in time. Approximately 60,000 people die from rabies each year worldwide.

Bats can carry rabies, so bats found inside homes are captured and tested. Bats are so small, that a bite might go unnoticed, especially in children.

Skunks, raccoons and foxes are the most common wildlife carriers of rabies. Horses, being curious, sometimes investigate sick animals and get bitten. The horse will not show obvious signs, it may just be sick. There is no treatment, it is fatal. When people examine the horse, they get exposed. Exposure

isn't necessarily a bite. Saliva that gets on a scratch on your hand could be dangerous.

Rabies vaccine is one of the core vaccines recommended for all horses by the American Association of Equine Practitioners. It is protection for everyone coming in contact with your horses. Your veterinarian can tell you if rabies is present in the local wildlife.

Tendon Injuries

Tendons are cords of connective tissue connecting muscle to bone or cartilage. Two flexor tendons are on the back of the leg, behind the canon bones. They are superficial and deep digital flexor tendons. They are covered by a sheath containing a little bit of fluid that allows the tendons to glide. Distension of the lower digital flexor tendon sheath is commonly called a "wind puff" and is not a problem.

Deep or uneven footing, along with strenuous exercise can strain the horse's tendons. The tendons may exhibit inflammation: heat, swelling and pain. The classic bowed tendon is obvious looking at the horse: the back of the leg, which should be a straight line, bows out. Milder strains are easier to detect when you pick up the leg and feel carefully for swelling and pain.

A horse with a tendon injury should be assessed by a veterinarian. Ultrasound of the area will show the extent of injury and can be used to monitor healing.

The first treatment of a tendon injury is the application of cold: cold hosing, or ice water in a manure bucket. Cold therapy should be applied for 20 minutes at a time, 2 to 3 times daily for 3 to 5 days. It helps to limit the inflammation.

Between cold treatments, the leg should be heavily bandaged to support the tendons and prevent swelling. Rest is imperative since exercise can make the damage worse. Your vet may

also prescribe cold poultices or bute. Equine specialists may use tendon splitting surgery or injectable medications to aid healing.

Several weeks are the minimum period of rest for minor tendon injuries. Some injuries benefit from a year of. The scar tissue that repairs the tendon is not as strong as the original tissue, so gradual return to work is imperative to avoid further damage.

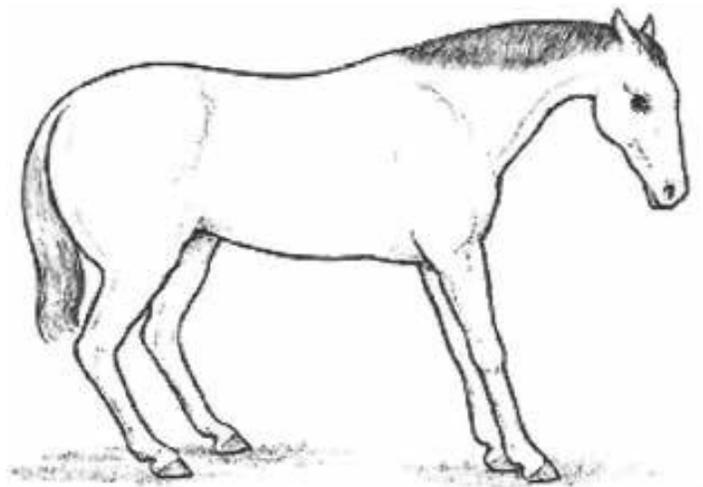
Laminitis

Laminitis is inflammation of the sensitive laminae that connects the coffin bone to the hoof wall. It is extremely painful. When permanent changes occur, such as the bone rotating within the hoof, it is called founder. Severe cases often result in euthanasia of the horse. Laminitis can occur with obesity, lush pasture, grain overload, toxins, retained placenta and some medications.

Signs of laminitis include lameness, reluctance to move and shifting of weight off the front legs. It may be hard to pick up a front foot, because it is so painful for the horse to put all its weight on the opposite foot. Pulses in the pasterns are stronger, and often faster than usual. The horse will have a painful grimace.

Immediate treatment is to ice the feet. Stand the horse in a bucket of ice water. The cold limits the inflammation.

Veterinary care is important, radiographs will show how much damage has occurred. Your farrier is crucial to treatment and recovery, as well. Recovery is often long and complicated if the horse can recover. Horses that have suffered one episode of laminitis are more prone to having it happen again. A lifelong diet, exercise and therapeutic shoeing will be needed.



LAMINITIS STANCE

PPID (Cushings)

Pituitary pars intermedia dysfunction (PPID) is a hormone disorder that can lead to laminitis and founder. Middle aged and older horses may show signs of excessive drinking and urination, muscle atrophy and long hair that doesn't shed normally. Blood tests are needed to definitively diagnose the condition, but sometimes treatment is started when signs are suspicious. Prascend is the name of the medication that is given daily, usually in a small amount of grain.

Catching the problem early can prevent painful, possibly fatal laminitis. A related problem is called Equine Metabolic Syndrome (EMS), which can occur in younger horses. Like PPID horses, these horses are at risk of laminitis. EMS is associated with obesity, so hopefully is not a concern for working ranch horses.

Bandaging

Bandaging may be done for many reasons. Bandages can protect wounds from further damage, keep an area clean, provide support, apply pressure to stop bleeding or to decrease swelling.

1st Layer: Contact Layer

Non-adherent, sterile gauze or Telfa pad to cover a wound, with a wrap of roll gauze to keep it in place.

2nd Layer: Padding

Cast padding, sheet or roll cotton wrapped around the limb to distribute pressure and prevent pressure sores. Use lots of padding if lots of pressure is to be applied. Diapers work!

3rd Layer: Outer Protection

Vetrap, stable wrap or polo wrap. Applies pressure as needed, always from the bottom up. Protects the inner layers. Secure with tape.

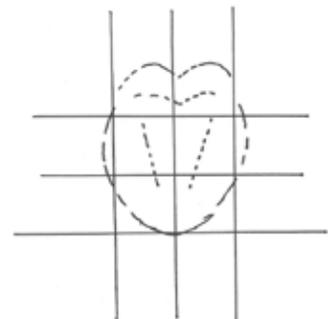
If you have a severely bleeding wound, put extra thick padding directly over the wound, then wrap tightly. Change the wrap in 12 hours; pressure may be needed for 48 hours or more.

Sweat Wrap

If there is swelling of the leg below the knee or hock (stocking up), a sweat wrap may be recommended. Ask your vet what they prefer to use (sometimes DMSO, or a liniment) on the leg, followed by plastic wrap, then a thick layer of padding and an outer layer with moderate pressure. Sweat wraps are usually changed every 12 to 24 hours.

Duct Tape Boot

Duct tape can be used to protect a bandage, or the hoof itself. Tear off several strips 12-16 inches long. Have a helper line up 2 of them, with 2 other strips crosswise. Lay this on the bottom of the hoof and bring the ends up. Wrap more tape around the hoof to secure it. Use more layers if it needs to be thicker.



Live Horse Practice

T Temperature Safely take the rectal temperature of a horse.

Gut Sounds:	Listen on both sides of the horse.
Palpate Flexor Tendons:	Both standing, and with foot picked up.
Bandaging:	Practice applying bandages to lower legs, with pressure applied from the bottom up.
Duct Tape Boot:	Learn how to construct and apply a duct tape boot.

Observe relaxed horses' posture, movement, and facial expressions. Discuss the confirmation, old injuries, or any other individual findings on the horses you are using.

Discuss HYDROTHERAPY: cold water can clean wounds as well as reduce inflammation, pain and swelling. It is the first treatment for laminitis.

Hydrotherapy can be applied with a hose, a bucket or by using a nearby stream.

Susan A. Tasillo DVM

Dr. Tasillo was born and raised in New England. She went to high school in Massachusetts and to college in Vermont (University of Vermont: B.S. in pre-veterinary science, 1976) She was accepted at Cornell University and received the Doctor of Veterinary Medicine degree in 1981. Dr. Tasillo worked in Massachusetts and New Hampshire until 2004. Following her husband's retirement, Dr. Tasillo bought Granby Veterinary Clinic in Granby, Colorado. Mountain living and mixed practice has been a dream come true.



Scoring system

The Henneke scale describes body condition scores as follows:^[5]

Score	Description	Definition	Image
1	Poor	Extremely emaciated; no fatty tissue; vertebrae, ribs, tail head, and bones of withers, shoulder, and neck are visible	
2	Very thin	Emaciated; slight tissue cover over bones; vertebrae, ribs, tail head, and bones of withers, shoulder, and neck are visible	
3	Thin	Slight fat cover over body; individual vertebrae and ribs no longer visibly discernible; withers, shoulders, and neck do not appear overly thin	
4	Moderately thin	Ridge of spine and outline of ribs are visible; tail head may or may not be visible depending on the breed; withers, shoulders, and neck do not appear overly thin	

5	Moderate	Spine and ribs cannot be seen however ribs can be felt; tail head is spongy; withers, shoulders, and neck are rounded and smooth	
6	Moderately fleshy	Slight crease down spine; ribs and tail head feel spongy; fat deposits along withers and neck and behind shoulders	
7	Fleshy	Crease down spine; ribs have fat filling between them; tail head spongy; fat deposits along withers and neck and behind shoulders	
8	Fat	Apparent crease down spine; ribs difficult to feel; soft fat surrounding tail head; fat deposits along withers, behind shoulders, and on inner thighs; neck is large	
9	Extremely fat	Obvious crease down spine; patchy fat on ribs; bulging fat on tail head, withers, behind shoulders, and on neck; fat fills in flank and on inner thighs	

DRA Partnerships

Agri Best Feeds

DRA members receive special pricing and discounts! Agri-Best Feeds all natural equine products they represent will elevate equine health and performance for less maintenance (better immune function), better feed digestion (Probiotein) and less gastric distress. Equilix tubs come standard with diatomaceous earth, garlic plant extract, flax, moss and NO molasses, NO sugar and NO starches. There are multiple phase programs offered to the DRA ranches. The products represented are Equilix, Equipride, and Redmond all natural salt products. Contact the DRA office for a direct contact to get started!

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Cactus Gear specializes in protecting not only your horse's legs, ligaments, and tendons, but also their skin, coat, and soft tissue. Your horse will be cared for with our products spanning from leg protection, winter blankets, and fly protection.

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Weaver Leather

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