



NEW ENGLAND EQUINE
MEDICAL & SURGICAL CENTER, PLLC

D. Michael Davis, DVM, MS
Katy Raynor, DVM
Amanda Bergren, DVM, DACVS
Alison Clode, DVM, DACVO
Kathy Samley, DVM

First Aid

Dr. Katy Raynor

Equine injuries can be just as common whether your horse is stalled or turned out to pasture. The best way to treat any injury, however, is to be prepared with a well-stocked, easily accessible first aid kit. In fact, keeping even a few of the below first aid essentials could help save a severely injured horse's life while you wait for your veterinarian to arrive.

Vital first aid supplies

Every horse owner needs a few basic first aid essentials. These items will help you dress wounds, reduce swelling and inflammation until your veterinarian arrives. Depending on your preference, pre-made first aid kits are available at our clinic. Or, you can make your own kit with the following items:

- **Bandages** - protect wounds, support muscles, and hold ice packs with horse leg wraps or self-adhesive bandages.
- **Blunt-Tipped Scissors** - safely cut away and remove bandages and wraps.
- **Buckets** - soak hooves and more with a few buckets kept specifically for first aid use.
- **Flashlight/Head lamp** - view wounds and injuries in darkness or poor light conditions.
- **Hoof Pick**
- **Ice Packs** - prevent and reduce swelling.
- **Rubbing Alcohol** - used as a disinfectant as well as good for cooling horses rapidly if febrile.
- **Sheet or Roll Cotton** - help apply pressure bandages or offer support to injured muscles or bones.
- **Sterile Gauze** - clean and cover minor cuts and wounds with sterile gauze or Telfa (non-stick) pads of various sizes. Use gauze rolls to hold dressings and pressure wraps in place.
- **Exam Gloves** - keep your hands clean and help prevent wound contamination.
- **Thermometer** - measure your horse's temperature (normal range is 99.0°F to 101.5°F) whenever you have a concern before you call the vet. EVERY FARM SHOULD HAVE AT LEAST ONE WORKING THERMOMETER!
- **Stethoscope** - Know how to take your horses heart rate! Great information to help your vet!
- **Wound Antiseptic**
- **Wound Cleaner**

Easy access to your veterinarian's and farrier's contact information is also vital. In addition, a complete record of all your horse's medications, vaccinations, and wormers is essential - especially in an emergency.

Helpful first aid extras

The best first aid kit holds a range of products to deal with a wide variety of injuries or accidents. In addition to the basics, however, having the following products accessible will help you further prepare for almost any mishap:

- **Electrolytes**
- **Probiotics** - (good quality)
- **Eye Cleanser/Saline**
- **Hoof Boot**
- **nSAIDS (phenylbutazone, banamine, Equioxx)** - Only used after consulting a veterinarian. Always take temperature before administration.
- **Poultice**

Trailing and Barn additional tip!

- **Always have a fire extinguisher available in your barn and trailer/truck at all times!**