

Be Prepared for an Emergency

An injury, illness or bad accident never seems to occur at a “convenient” time. Being prepared for these emergencies can make all the difference.

Being able and ready to render first aid until your veterinarian arrives, is not as hard as it may appear. Here are some helpful hints with respect to advance preparation and a list of contents for a good first aid kit—something all horse owners should have available at all times.

Have a plan:

Keep your veterinarian’s phone number handy and by each phone, especially how he or she can be reached after hours.

Talk with your regular veterinarian about a “back-up” or referring veterinarian should your veterinarian not be available or out of town.

Know the route to an equine surgery center, should you need to transport your horse there.

Have names and numbers of friends or neighbors who can help out in an emergency.

Have a first aid kit with you at home and on the road.

Contents for a good first aid kit:

- ? Cotton roll (sterile)
- ? Contact bandage (sterile)
- ? Cling wrap (sterile)
- ? Gauze pads, assorted sizes (sterile)
- ? Gauze wrap (sterile)
- ? Adhesive wrap and adhesive tape
- ? Leg wraps
- ? Sharp scissors
- ? Hemostats
- ? Steel cup or container
- ? Rectal thermometer (with string and clip attached)
- ? Surgical scrub and antiseptic solution
- ? Latex gloves
- ? Flashlight and spare batteries
- ? Permanent marker pen
- ? Pliers (to pull nails)
- ? 6 inch diameter PVC tubing, cut in half the long way (like a gutter) into lengths 1.5 to 2 feet (for emergency splinting)

Store these materials neatly in a sturdy container. A new plastic tool box works well. These are available at all hardware stores, are very durable, come in an assortment of sizes and are competitively priced.

Many clinics will provide a good first aid kit at a very reasonable price. As always, if you have questions about what to do in an emergency or how to put together a good first aid kit for your horse—talk to your veterinarian. He or she will be happy to help prepare you for that unforeseen accident or emergency—should it ever occur.