

Equine First Aid Kit

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Medications:

Phenylbutazone (Bute) oral paste – 1 tube
Flunixin meglumine (Banamine) oral paste – 1 tube
Weight tape to dose the Banamine paste

Bandage Materials:

Betadine (povidone-iodine) solution
60cc syringe
4x4 gauze sponges (1 pkg)
Telfa® non-stick pads (2)
6” rolled gauze cling (2 rolls)
Roll cotton (1 lb)
Vet wrap (3 rolls)
Duct tape (2 rolls)
1” white tape (2 rolls)

NORMAL EXAM PARAMETERS – ADULT HORSE AT REST

Rectal Temperature: 98.0 – 101.0 °F
Pulse: 24 – 40 beats per minute
Respiratory rate: 8 – 16 breaths per minute

COLIC

Colic can be one of the most life-threatening conditions your horse may face. The sooner it can be treated the better the chances are for a good outcome. Some mild colics can be treated with Banamine alone, as this is an excellent pain medication for the organs within the abdomen. Calling the veterinarian if you suspect colic, before you administer any medications, is generally a good idea. Having the Banamine paste on hand will allow you to talk to the vet and decide together if giving the paste is the best course of action or if the vet should come out and give IV Banamine. Some colics need more than just Banamine; some may even need surgery, so keeping the veterinarian in the loop is important. Banamine paste is dosed based upon weight and the plunger has pound-based weight increments on it. If you are unsure about the weight of your horse, weight tape can help you make a good estimate. Most normal-sized adult horses weigh about 1000 lb and can receive one 1000 lb dose (1/3 of the tube) by mouth once every 24 hours. It will take 15-30 minutes for oral Banamine paste to take effect. If the horse lies down quietly and does not roll or thrash, it is OK to allow him/her to lie down and relax. However, if the horse is rolling or thrashing walking may keep the horse from injuring him/herself until the vet arrives, as long as it is safe for you to do so. Always keep your own safety in mind because a horse in pain can be dangerous!

LACERATIONS

Lacerations can vary from mild skin abrasions to deep wounds that involve muscles, large blood vessels, or even joints. For a mild wound use the gauze sponges or hunks of cotton soaked in dilute Betadine solution (mix to the color of weak tea) to gently clean

the edges of the wound. A syringe may be used to irrigate the wound by squirting the dilute Betadine solution at the center of the wound. If there is a foreign body in the wound, do not pull it out until the vet arrives so that he/she can assess what structures the object has penetrated. If you have any plans for having the vet sew the wound edges back together, contact the vet as soon as possible and do not apply any ointments or other topical medications as this will only complicate things. If the wound needs to be bandaged, start with the 4x4 gauze sponges soaked in dilute Betadine OR Telfa® pads directly on the wound. These can be held in place with the rolled guaze cling. Next, apply a thick layer of roll cotton to provide padding. Finally, use vet wrap to hold everything in place, being sure that cotton sticks out above and below the vet wrap to prevent the vet wrap from becoming too tight. The white tape may be used if needed to secure the end of the vet wrap. If the wound is bleeding, this bandage will be the best way to provide pressure to stop the bleeding. If blood soaks through the bandage, do not remove it...simply add another layer of cotton and vet wrap to apply more pressure until the vet arrives. The duct tape is useful for foot wounds, to reinforce the bandage and provide a somewhat waterproof layer. Just be sure the duct tape does not become tight on the coronary band.

PAIN CONTROL

Phenylbutazone (Bute) and Banamine paste are both pain control medications, similar to Tylenol® for humans. A mild lameness such as a strain or sprain is most commonly treated using Bute at a dose of 1-2 grams once per day for 2-3 days for a 1000 lb horse. If the pain is not controlled with this dose or continues for longer than 3 days, there may be a more serious problem that needs to be addressed. It would be wise to rest the horse when giving the Bute in case the drug is masking a more serious problem. Banamine may be dosed according to weight, once daily, if it is preferred to Bute. Colic is one instance when Banamine tends to be preferred over Bute (see COLIC section). However, you should **never give both Bute and Banamine at the same time** as this can cause severe side effects.

This information is brought to you by Colorado State University's Equine Field Service.
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This list is far from complete when it comes to the troubles a horse can get him/herself into. It is impossible to cover every situation, and each case within the above categories is different. This list is in no way a substitute for having your horse examined by a veterinarian. Rather, it is meant to offer advice for stabilizing the problem until your veterinarian can arrive.