

# Utah State University Equine First Aid Flip Booklet

**Instructions:** Print this page on cardstock, and laminate it to ensure resilience over time and to allow a dry erase marker to be used to indicate how much of each supply you have in stock. Cut out each card, and punch a hole in the upper left-hand corner and attach with a loose-leaf ring. Keep with your first-aid kit, in a location near your horse.



## Equine First Aid Information

**EXTENSION**   
**UtahState**University

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**UtahState**University

### Primary Vet Information

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_  
Email: \_\_\_\_\_

### Backup Vet Information

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_  
Email: \_\_\_\_\_

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 **EXTENSION**   
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### Emergency Contact 1

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

### Emergency Contact 2

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

### Emergency Contact 3

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

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 **EXTENSION**   
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### First Aid On Hand

- \_\_\_ Adhesive tape
- \_\_\_ Antiseptic scrub
- \_\_\_ Disposable latex gloves
- \_\_\_ Disposable razor
- \_\_\_ Duct tape
- \_\_\_ Epsom salt
- \_\_\_ Farrier's rasp
- \_\_\_ Flash light
- \_\_\_ Gauze dressing pads
- \_\_\_ Hoof pick
- \_\_\_ Hoof dressing
- \_\_\_ Isopropyl (rubbing) alcohol

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- \_\_\_ Lubricant for the thermometer
- \_\_\_ Nonsteroidal eye ointment
- \_\_\_ Oral Syringe
- \_\_\_ Pocket knife
- \_\_\_ Rectal thermometer
- \_\_\_ Roll gauze
- \_\_\_ Safety scissors
- \_\_\_ Scissors
- \_\_\_ Tweezers
- \_\_\_ Udder ointment
- \_\_\_ Vet wrap
- \_\_\_ Wound ointment/spray
- \_\_\_ Wire cutters



**CHECKING VITALS:**

**Temperature** (degrees in f)

Adult- 99- 101.0\* Newborn- 99.5-102.1\*F

How to take the temperature-

Stand to the side, close to the horse to avoid being kicked.

Lubricate the end of the thermometer.

Lift the tail and gently insert the thermometer into the horse's rectum.

Make sure the tip of the thermometer rests against the rectal wall (i.e., make sure it is not inserted into dung).

Hold the end of the thermometer to stop it disappearing up the rectum.

Electronic thermometers will 'beep' when an accurate reading is obtained.



**Pulse Rate**

Adult- 28 to 44 (beats per minute)

Newborn- 80-100 (beats per minute)

How and where to take pulse:

**1.** Standing at your horse's left side, use your fingertips to feel the space along your horse's jawbone under his cheek for a cordlike structure about the thickness of a pencil. It is located directly below and slightly behind the front corner of your horse's eye. This is his transverse facial artery, and you will feel it move around under his skin.



**2.** Curl your middle and ring fingers toward your palm, gently pressing the cord against the inside of his left jawbone. *(Note: Do not use your thumb--you will feel your own pulse instead of your horse's!)*

**3.** Once you feel the pulse, count the number of beats you feel while looking at the second hand on your watch to note when 15 seconds has elapsed. Multiply the number of pulses you count by four. This will give you the total bpm.



### Respiration

Watch flank of horse for inhale and exhale, or watch flare of nose. Do not use your hand.

Adults- 10 to 24 (breaths per minute)  
Newborns-20-40 (breaths per minute)

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### Mucus Membrane Color and Capillary Refill

Mucous membranes can be visualized by lifting the upper lip and examining the gums. Normal, healthy mucus membranes are pink and moist. Pale, dry, or dark red mucus membranes can indicate dehydration, shock or illness.

Capillary refill refers to the the time that it takes for the gums to return to pink after being pressed with a finger. Normal capillary refill time should be 2 seconds or less. Slower refill times can be a sign of dehydration, illness, and shock.

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### Signs of Colic

- Anxiety or depression
- Pawing at the ground
- Kicking at stomach
- Looking at/ biting at the flank
- Rolling or wanting to lie down
- Playing in the water bucket but not drinking
- Lack of defecation
- Lack of appetite
- Excessive sweating
- Abnormally high pulse rate (over 50 beats per minute)
- Lack of normal gut noises
- Frequent attempts to urinate
- Bloating

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### What to do if your horse is showing symptoms of colic:

- Call your vet
- Do not let horse roll
- Take vitals

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### Deworming Program

Veterinarians recommend deworming your horse between 2-6 times a year. Some deworming protocols using pyrantel tartrate are administered daily. However, there is debate about the effectiveness of repeated use of the same dewormers. The choice of dewormers should be rotated. Before beginning a deworming schedule, it is wise to have a serious discussion with your veterinarian about the best possible deworming schedule for your horse.



### Equine Vaccinations Recommended for Utah

Vaccine recommendations are divided into Core Vaccines and Risk-Based Vaccines. Core Vaccines should be given to all horses yearly.

The diseases we are vaccinating against are naturally occurring in our areas, or closely surrounding areas. These diseases are also spread by other animals that we can't always control.



For example, Utah does not have any reported cases of equine rabies; however, we have wild animals that do test positive and can spread the disease to horses. Risk-based vaccines should be given depending on stage of life, event activity and travel. Veterinarians also may recommend additional vaccines during gestation to help protect the fetus, along with increasing the quality of colostrum (mother's first milk).

Always consult your veterinarian before implementing a vaccination schedule.



### Core Vaccines for Utah:

- Tetanus
- Eastern and Western equine encephalitis (EEE/WEE)
- West Nile Virus (WNV)
- Rabies (for the public health aspect)

### Risk-based Vaccines Commonly Used in Utah:

- Equine Influenza
- Equine herpes virus (EHV)
- Strangles (if stable, show, or event requires; or if environmental risk is high)



### Injection Sites

Vaccines have a specific route of administration indicated on their label. Common routes used are intramuscular (in the muscle or IM), intranasal (in the nostril), and subcutaneous (just under the skin or SQ). The most common route is IM. There are several sites with quality muscle mass that are safe for vaccinations.

Most vaccine type injections are given with a 20 or 22 gauge, 1 to 1 ½ inch sterile needle and sterile syringe.



Locations for injections include the neck, pectoral muscle, and hamstring or semitendinosus muscle. When injecting in the neck muscle care should be taken to avoid the nuchal ligament (dorsal), spine (ventral), and scapula (caudal). After inserting the needle, you should draw back on the syringe to make sure you are not in a blood vessel. If blood appears in the syringe, do not inject the vaccine, but pull out and select a different location.



### Hoof Care

A general guideline for frequency of shoeing (trimming and resetting shoes) a horse is every 6-8 weeks.

A general rule for frequency of trimming non-use or light use, unshod horses is every 10-12 weeks.

Horses adapted to performing with trimming only will require more frequent trimming with less hoof removed each time. In many cases, hooves are ready to be trimmed again between 5 and 7 weeks.



### Dental Care

As general rule, have your horse evaluated yearly by a veterinarian for dental care beginning as early as 1-year-old. Signs that dental problems may exist include, but are not limited to, dropping feed, swelling on the side of the face, fighting the bit, drooling, underweight, foul breath, and misalignment of the front incisors.

Proper equine dental care usually requires sedation and should only be performed under the direct supervision of a veterinarian.



Created by Karah Nay and Karl Hoopes, DVM

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