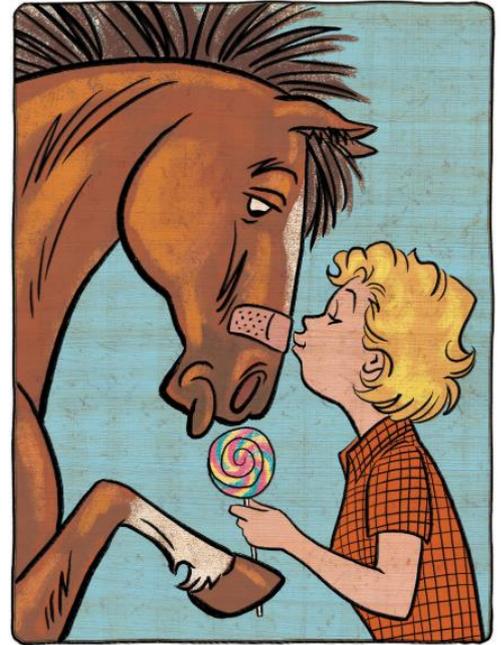


FIRST AID FOR HORSES

Introduction

Horses, like children, are prone to illness and injury, and it is your responsibility and duty as a horse owner to take the best care of your horse. First aid is an emergency measure, generally consisting of simple, often life-saving techniques that most people can train to perform with minimal equipment and no previous medical experience. First aid is not classed as a medical treatment and does not replace interventions from a trained veterinary professional. Through attending our Introduction to First Aid course I hope I can refresh your knowledge on the basics of first aid and help you manage emergency situations to best protect your horse.



Who to contact in the case of an emergency:

Emergency contact: Phone 021 7122290 Cape Vet Equine Practice number in office hours to find out which vet is closest to you and after hours this number is always diverted to the vet on call. Call this number first! The vet on duty will guide you as to how to handle the situation and what to do while you wait for the vet to arrive

First Aid is a combination of simple procedures and common sense.

Goals for first Aid:

- **PRESERVE LIFE** – prevent the horse from dying.
- **PREVENT FURTHER INJURY** – stop the horse from being injured even further. This may entail moving the horse from a harmful situation, applying basic first aid, keeping the horse warm and dry or cool and wet depending on the situation. May entail applying pressure to a bleeding wound.
- **PROMOTE RECOVERY** – ensure the horse is able to heal its injuries. Cleaning and applying a bandage to a wound for example.

The ABCD's of first aid in horses:

- **AIRWAY:** Make sure the airway is clear. Obstruction of airways resulting in choking can be fatal.
- **BREATHING:** Once the airways are confirmed to be clear, determine whether the horse can breathe.
- **CIRCULATION:** If the horse involved in the emergency situation is not breathing, the first aider should go straight for chest compressions and rescue breathing. In emergencies that are not life-threatening, the first aider needs to check for a pulse.
- **DEADLY BLEEDING:** Applying pressure to bleeding wound or dressing severe wounds.

Are you prepared for an emergency at your stable yard:



- Do you have a first aid kit?
- Do you know what to do?
- Do you know who to call?

Typical emergencies with horses may include:

- Colic
- Bleeding wounds
- Cuts and swellings
- Not eating
- Severe fevers
- Bloody nose
- Allergic reactions
- Choke

Dr Lee Baragwanath will be giving a series of introductory first aid courses, the first one being on 21 February 2020. If you are interested in attending please contact the office via capevet@telkomsa.net

