

Summer Time Checklist

It's that time of the year...the temperatures are on the rise! Summer is the season for trail riding and horse shows. Are you and your horse prepared for the season and some of the challenges this time of year can bring for horse owners? Continue reading our June newsletter below for some helpful information regarding traveling with your horse and keeping your horse healthy this summer. In addition, if you have any questions or concerns, or would like to schedule an appointment, feel free to contact us.

Traveling with Your Horse This Summer?

Are you traveling with your horse this summer? Do you have the proper documentation for your horse to travel? Whether you and your equine partner will be traveling for showing or recreational purposes, you need to be prepared with the proper documentation and testing for your horse. See below for the appropriate documents your horse will need to travel:

- Coggins Test: Your horse will need a negative Coggins test prior to traveling or any movement of the horse off your property whether for showing or recreational purposes.
 - *What is a Coggins test?*
 - A Coggins test is a screening test for EIA (Equine Infectious Anemia), which is a viral disease of horses usually spread by biting flies. Testing is performed by a simple blood draw.
 - *Why does your horse need a Coggins test?*
 - A negative Coggins' test is required by most showgrounds, parks, equestrian centers, etc., and you will often need to show proof of a negative Coggins test prior to the horse being allowed to participate in events. Also, law enforcement in many areas can stop you and ask for proof of a negative Coggins test.
 - Depending on where your horse is traveling, you may need a Coggins' test that has been completed within the last 6-12 months.
 - In addition, all states require a negative Coggins test for the horse to travel across state lines.
 - We encourage all horse owners to have an up-to-date Coggins test for your horses performed on a yearly basis at minimum.

- **BE PREPARED**---having an up-to-date Coggins test on hand prior to anticipated events and traveling with your horse, and/or allowing adequate time for the test results to be reported, is ideal compared to having to test your horse on short notice.
 - [Click Here](#) for more information from the Equine Disease Communication Center and the AAEP about EIA.
 - Health Certificate:
 - *When do you need a health certificate to travel with your horse?*
 - A health certificate is REQUIRED for horses traveling across state lines.
 - Your horse will need a health certificate from a veterinarian, as well as meet any additional requirements of the state the horse is traveling to, in order to cross state lines.
 - If the venue your horse is traveling to requires a health certificate.
 - Law enforcement in many areas can stop you and ask you for proper travel documentation. Some states also have inspection stations that require you to stop and show proof of documentations for your horse.
 - *How do you obtain a health certificate?*
 - In order to obtain a health certificate, your horse will need an examination performed by a veterinarian as well as a negative Coggins test performed within the last 6-12 months (depending on the state requirements).
 - If your horse is traveling internationally, you horse will also need to meet the requirements determined by the country the horse will be entering.

Contact us for more information and guidance if your horse is traveling either within or out of the Commonwealth of Virginia.

The Colicing Horse--What To Do When You Horse is Colicing

A horse can present with signs of colic, or abdominal pain, for many reasons and signs can often develop abruptly. Although, colic can certainly be detrimental in some cases, close monitoring and quick responses are certainly helpful in improving your horse's odds of getting the help or relief he needs. Continue reading below for more information on the signs of colic, or abdominal pain, and tips on what to do when your horse is exhibiting such signs.

- Common Signs of Colic/Abdominal Pain:

- Colic signs can vary widely between horses and can also vary in severity, but signs may often include one or more of the following:
 - Not eating or not finishing feed/meal or decreased appetite
 - Lying down frequently, or getting up and lying back down repetitively
 - Restlessness
 - Looking at or biting at the abdomen or sides
 - Kicking at abdomen
 - Rolling repetitively and/or violently, thrashing violently
 - Dull, depressed mentation

- What to do if you suspect your horse is exhibiting signs of colic:
 - CALL YOUR VETERINARIAN if you think your horse might be exhibiting signs of colic or discomfort. A veterinarian can advise you on the next steps to take for your horse.
 - DO NOT DELAY in contacting your veterinarian. If your horse is still exhibiting signs of colic/pain outside of an hour of first exhibiting signs, your horse will most likely need medical attention.
 - If it is safe to do so, try walking the horse for several minutes at a time and walk the horse frequently. However, if the horse is trashing or behaving violently, do not get hurt or injured trying to walk the horse or keep the horse standing.
 - DO NOT try to feed or water the horse as this may cause further problems.
 - DO NOT administer any medications to the horse prior to consulting with your veterinarian. Give any medications only as instructed by a veterinarian.
 - BE PREPARED.
 - Have a truck and travel available/prepared if your horse needs to be referred or transported to an equine hospital.
 - See the links below under “additional resources” for more information and tips on what to do if you think your horse is exhibiting signs of colic.

- Tips to help decrease the odds of colic in your horse:
 - Provide clean, fresh water at all times.
 - If your horse seems to be drinking less water than usual, adding a small amount of electrolytes or lite salt to your horse’s diet/feed can help encourage drinking---call your veterinarian for further advice on how to use electrolytes and salt appropriately for your horse.

- Try to avoid changing your horse's daily schedule or feeding times as much as possible.
- Make any feeding changes slowly and gradually over approximately 7-10 days or more---your veterinarian can help advise you on how to make feeding changes for your horse.
- Provide a salt or mineral salt block for your horse.
- Call your veterinarian with any questions or concerns you may have---we are here to help guide you.
- See the links below under "additional resources" for more information and tips on helping to decrease your horse's risk of colic.
- Additional resources:
 - Article from thehorse.com (colic resources): ["Dealing With Equine Colic: 33 Do's and Don'ts"](#)
 - Article from thehorse.com (normal vital signs in horses): [Normal Vital Signs Health Indicators](#)