

HEALTHY AS A HORSE



It's Springtime in Saskatchewan which makes it the perfect time to get out and ride! There are many important steps necessary to ensure your horse is ready for a great season. Whether you are a weekend rider or you attend every show, your veterinarian can play a key role in keeping you and your equine partner safe on the trails.

There are a variety of vaccines available, including basic 4-way vaccines, strangles, influenza, and rabies. West Nile Virus is another important disease to vaccinate against and with mosquito season upon us, now is a great time to consider vaccination. Vaccination protocols can vary depending on the needs of each individual horse. Talk with your veterinarian to determine the best protocol for your horse.

Deworming is an important part of keeping your horse healthy. The numbers and types of parasites affecting your horse can vary based on the time of year, amount of traveling you do, and the region you live in so developing a personalized program is important. Consult with your veterinarian on the best protocol for your horse.

Equine Infectious Anemia (EIA) is a reportable disease that is spread by biting insects. There is no vaccine for EIA so the only method of control is to test horses regularly. Many equine events now require proof of a negative Coggins test in order to compete. It is important to remember that horses can be carriers of the disease while showing no symptoms and can infect other horses, which makes testing even more important when coming into contact with others at showing events.

When it comes to dental care, prevention is the best medicine. Dental problems can lead to difficulty bridling, head tossing, and rearing. Your horse's teeth can also affect their health and well-being. A horse with poor teeth may drool, drop feed from its mouth, or even choke while eating, and this can eventually lead to weight loss. Ensuring your horse's teeth are maintained is essential, as vices such as rearing are not always due to bad behaviour.

Have you found a new horse to add to your herd? Consider including your veterinarian before you purchase your new-found companion. A horse is a major investment and some health problems may not be visible to the naked eye. Veterinarians can perform a full physical exam and check for any signs of lameness before you bring your new equine partner home.

