

Possible Signs of Illness, Neglect, or Intentional Cruelty

Appearance of Animal

Thin (ribs, vertebrae and hip bone are prominent); halter and other harness or saddle sores; excessive hoof length; a hoof which is spongy on the bottom and has a foul odor; poor coat (dull, matted); bite wounds from constant fighting with other horses.

Housing Conditions

Lack of fresh water or available food; no shelter; overcrowding; no place to lie down; excessive manure build-up; standing on muddy ground with no dry areas. Note: Insufficient manger space for the number of horses can result in a competitive situation which causes the weakest animals to be excluded from the food source.

Behavior

Head down and unresponsive; inactive; no appetite; indifferent to surroundings and visitors; excessively fearful; odd standing behavior (not putting weight on one leg), lying on the ground excessively, standing with weight on hind quarters, and resting chin on fence rail to get weight off forefeet can all be signs of lameness, founder, or laminitis all indicate a need for veterinary care.

Reporting Cruelty

Animal cruelty should be reported to the police department of the town in which the animal lives. Please leave your name and contact information so that a follow-up response may be made.

Additional Resources

The Horse
www.thehorse.com

**The Humane Society of the
United States**
[www.humanesociety.org/animals/horses/
tips/horse_care_guidelines.html](http://www.humanesociety.org/animals/horses/tips/horse_care_guidelines.html)

Unwanted Horse Coalition
www.unwantedhorsecoalition.org



For more information about
animal cruelty, visit
www.humane.nh.gov
Be sure to view the **Interactive
Presentation** on the **Welcome Page.**

CARING FOR HORSES



Recommendations

Sponsored by

**The Governor's
Commission
on the
Humane
Treatment
of
Animals**



Template Courtesy of Vermont Humane Federation

Horses: The Basics

Terminology

Equine – horse, asses, mules, donkeys, zebras, ponies or any other member of the equine family.

Female - Mare

Young female - Filly

Male - Stallion

Castrated male - Gelding

Young male – Colt

Green – minimal training, use caution when handling

Broke – trained in ground manners and under saddle (to be ridden or driven by a human)

Halter – harness that is placed upon horse's head to lead/control horse, usually a lead rope is attached to it.

Horse Care Recommendations

Fresh, clean, potable water should be available at all times. State law requires "all horses shall have available a sufficient quantity of fresh water to maintain hydration." (NH RSA 435:13) This is equally critical in winter and summer to avoid dehydration and colic. Multiple water sources are preferable.

Feeding Horses

Horses should be fed a quality pasture grass or a complete hay diet consisting of good quality hay (a 1000 lb horse will eat between 1/2 and 3/4 bale of hay per day; for a pony or small breed, 1/3 bale); as a general guideline, one can estimate a dry matter intake of between 2-3 percent body weight for maintenance depending on the forage quality Or a partial hay diet consisting of a sufficient supply of good hay (1/6 to 1/3 bale), along with either oats, sweet feed, or other grain or a "complete" grain type feed for those horses who cannot eat hay because

of health problems or as advised by a veterinarian.

General rule: Two pounds of food daily for every one hundred (100) pounds of the animal's weight. That may be hay or grain.

It is preferable that hay and grain not be thrown on the ground, which could lead to infection or reinfection from parasites, but rather placed in a manger or hay rack, or in the case of grain, in a bucket or suitable container. All feed should be rotated and kept dry to avoid mold.

Salt blocks are recommended—either white salt or preferably trace mineralized salt (red blocks).

Hoof Care

Hooves require trimming approximately every 6 to 12 weeks. A horse does not always require horse shoes. Shoeing depends on the condition of the horse's feet, the type of work the horse does, the surface it travels on, and how often it travels.

Horse hooves should be cleaned on a weekly basis, by being picked out with a hoof pick to remove mud, dirt and stones.



Health Care

Horses should be examined by a state licensed veterinarian at least once a year. The examination usually includes annual vaccinations and a physical examination. Teeth should be checked annually and floated (filed down) if necessary.

New Hampshire state rule requires that every equine imported into New Hampshire must be accompanied by a current certificate of veterinary inspection documenting a negative equine infectious anemia test (e.g. Coggins test) within the six months prior to entering the state.

Horses should be de-wormed every three months ideally, but at least in the spring and fall.

Shelter Requirements (From NH Law)

435:14 Shelter Available. – Horses shall be provided either:

I. An adequately ventilated, dry barn with stalls of sufficient size so that the horse is able to lie down, and shall be provided adequate and suitable exercise in arenas, barn yards, paddocks or pastures; or

II. A roofed shelter, with at least 3 sides from November 1 through April 15, shall be provided for horses kept in paddocks or pastures, and said horses shall not be kept tied but shall be able to move around freely.

Fencing

Horses should also have adequate fencing to ensure they do not run at large. Fencing should be checked on a regular basis to ensure it is secure. Wood, electric fence, woven mesh and pipe/steel fencing are common; barbed wire fencing should not be used with horses. Barbed wire is dangerous and may cause severe injuries to the horse.

For further clarification on accepted animal husbandry practices for horses, please contact The New Hampshire Department of Agriculture, Markets and Food, Division of Animal Industry, www.nh.gov/agric/divisions/animal_industry