



BLENDING NATURE AND TECHNOLOGY

OCTOBER 2015

newsletter

this month's issue



1. ASK EQUUS
2. Body Condition Score of Mare impacts sex of Foal
3. Contact Us

ASK EQUUS

Question: "I give my horse an electrolyte every day. Is this really necessary?"

Answer:

In general, the average horse will not need every day electrolyte supplementation. A horse that sweats during a short ride or weekend competition might lose some body water and salts, but these losses are usually replenished quickly after eating hay, drinking, or having access to a salt block.

However, there are situations where supplementation is important for a horse's welfare. These include endurance races, cross-country phases of eventing and polo.

The goal of electrolyte supplementation is to replace electrolytes lost through sweating and thereby restore the proper balance of electrolytes in the horse's body. Therefore if your horse is not profusely sweating then supplementation is not really necessary. "However, the longer a horse exercises, the hotter and more humid the climate, the less fit the horse, or the harder the effort - the more he sweats. More sweat means more body salts (electrolytes) are lost along with evaporated fluid and thus the greater the need for supplementation"

"Electrolytes are salts - notably potassium, chloride, sodium, calcium, and magnesium - and are essential for proper body function. Staying ahead of salt and fluid losses is instrumental in maintaining hydration, efficient muscle function and the ability of the horse to perform to a safe standard and with enthusiasm for his work"

Should you feel your horse needs electrolytes it is always worth checking with your vet or local nutritionist first, as over supplementation of electrolytes can irritate the intestinal tract.

Todd C. Holbrook, DVM, Dipl. ACVIM, of Oklahoma State University, found that "electrolyte supplementation can induce gastric ulceration or worsen pre-existing gastric ulcers." Electrolyte administration dose and frequency in this study was chosen to mimic common electrolyte replacement strategies used in endurance competition during high heat and humidity conditions.

Testimonials

Dear Equus

Hi Equus

I just wanted to let you know how happy I am that I changed to Equus. I moved my horse over to **Equus Nice 'n Easy** earlier this year and haven't looked back.

The lower level of molasses, compared with his previous feed, means a much healthier horse. A healthier horse means a happier horse.

My horse just loves Equus!

Much love,
Jessica Dench



Conclusion:

While daily supplementation is not always necessary it is important to consider in times of high need such as long distance travel, hot temperatures or extremes of physical competition. The equine gut serves as a reservoir of fluid and electrolytes to be drawn on in times of need, so it is good to always encourage hay consumption in horses engaged in aerobic exercise, as well as to consider access to a free choice salt block as this will provide the horse with additional Sodium not always found in correct amounts within hays and commercial feeds. While electrolytes will not necessarily guarantee success, these supplements can be highly beneficial in keeping horses in top physical condition to perform their best.



Body Condition Score of Mare Impacts Sex of Foal

By Kentucky Equine Research Staff · October 15, 2015

Most of us are aware of the importance of body condition on equine reproductive success. What some of us might not know is that there is some evidence that the sex of the foal can be impacted by the mare's body condition score (BCS).

Previous research in wild horses in New Zealand has shown that mares in good condition at the time of conception produced more colts. When mares were light, they produced more fillies. This finding was further explored by a researcher at Massey University in New Zealand. Out of 24 mares on two separate studs with BCSs between 3.5 and 8, he found:

- Mares with a BCS between 5.0 and 6.2 (mean 5.6) at the time of cover produced fillies; and
- Mares with a BCS between 6.3 and 7.3 (mean 6.8) at the time of cover produced colts.
- If mares are too fat, they can have delayed conception or an increased risk of foals with developmental orthopedic disease." in size before swallowing (such as long stem grass or hay). This is a problem as large clumps of hay or grass (boluses) could become stuck in the oesophagus, causing choke. Where a horse is missing molars, then you will need to take some of the work out of chewing for him.



Karen is a Protea Dressage rider and National Champion, who is highly regarded in her field. When Karen is not schooling her own horses, she spends a lot of time teaching up and coming riders at Kellandstables, as well as at their home yards.

In this new series, Karen will be sharing her schooling “top tips” to help you and your horse in your everyday riding.

Buying a horse

Take a trusted adviser with you- ideally take your instructor as they will be more accomplished at matching your skills with your potential new horse.

When looking at the horses conformation look at the hooves first then work up to the head - the old saying of `no hoof no horse ` most certainly applies.

Temperament ,temperament ,temperament - no matter how talented the horse, if it does not want to work with you it will be a struggle for any amateur.

Anything with `too` in front of it i.e too tall ,too long ,too slow, too fast.

Do your homework- Verify age , passport , veterinary history ,competition history if need be and even ask around for references on the horses temperament.

Get a pre- purchase vetting. Do not skimp on this and use your own vet when possible.

Try the horse several times in various situations so that you know what to expect.

Don't be desperate - if it does not tick all your boxes keep looking! The right horse is out there.

I wish you a long and enjoyable journey with your horse.

Happy riding

Contact Us

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For an absolutely free consultation with no further obligation contact our professional consultants to schedule a visit to your yard.

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