

## Hot Weather Horse Care Tips

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to keep your beloved horse cool through the dog days of summer!

Provide ample fresh clean water: Empty and refill buckets daily with fresh COOL water. Ponies and foals may have trouble reaching to the bottom of a shallowly filled trough. Make sure everyone in your paddocks can reach the water.

Use a wet COLD Sponge or hose down the large blood vessels with cold water along the inside of the legs, belly, and neck. Don't spray the horse's face or get water in its ears—sponge them down gently.

Schedule your horses training session for early morning or late evening when it is cooler.

After working your horse in hot weather cool your horse down slowly: Loosen girths or belly bands immediately after a work out. Offer sips of cool, not cold water and walk the horse slowly. Muscles are more apt to stiffen if the horse is allowed to stand and moving muscles dissipate heat better than stationary ones.

Use electrolytes if your horse is sweating hard or your horse will be working hard (a long trail ride or competition). Electrolytes replace salts lost in sweating. You can put electrolytes in the horse's feed, or use a large ended syringe to squirt into the mouth. Use electrolytes made for horses. Electrolytes made for other livestock may be unsuitable.

Make sure there is a place for your horse to avoid the sun—either a building or a shade tree, if stalled hang up a fan for continuous air flow. Make sure the horse can not reach the cord or fan itself, it can't be tipped, and that it is plugged into a ground fault interrupt electrical receptacle if there is any chance of electrical wiring coming into contact with moisture, such as a spilled water bucket or a curious horse's mouth.

Clip horses with heavy coats, but don't clip too close since exposed skin can sunburn.

Apply zinc oxide cream to horses with pink noses to prevent and treat sunburn.

### USE FLY SPRAYS, FLY MASKS & FLY SHEETS!

Horses will overheat in hot weather from stomping, kicking, biting and pacing at flies.

During very hot weather keep your horses stabled during the day, and let them out at night.

Keep a bucket full of ice water and old towels on hand to refresh you and your horse. Place them over your horse's neck, and your own. A drop of lemon, mint, or citronella essential oil on the people towels is an energizing touch.

Heat stroke can happen to horses whether they are working hard, or standing in stuffy stables or traveling in trailers.

Call a vet and take immediate action if your horse exhibits any of these symptoms:

Elevated respiration in an inactive horse (normal range is 4 to 16 breaths per minute).

Elevated pulse in an inactive horse, or pulse that does not drop after several minutes or climbs once exercise has stopped.

Profuse sweating or no sweating at all.

Elevated body temperature above 103F.

Irregular heart beat known as 'thumps'.

A depressed attitude.

Dehydration. Test for this by observing your horse's flanks. If they look caved in, he is probably dehydrated. Pick up a pinch of skin along your horse's neck. If the skin snaps back quickly the horse is sufficiently hydrated. If the pinched area collapses slowly the horse is dehydrated.

#### What to Do Until The Vet Arrives

Use shade, cold water, breezes and fans to keep your beloved horse as cool as you can. Stand your horse in a pond or stream. Sponge or spray the large blood vessels along the inside of the legs and belly. Offer sips of water.

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