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Horse Nibbles

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From Bourdeaus' and Bushey, Inc – Middlebury, VT
<http://www.bourdeaubrothersofmiddlebury.com>

Normal Horse Temperature, Heart Rate, Breathing Rate

It's essential that every horse owner know their horse's normal, healthy resting temperature, heart rate, respiration (breathing) rate, and other vital signs and have trained the horse to allow handling for assessment of vital signs. If your horse becomes ill or injured, quickly take his vital signs before calling the veterinarian to help him/her get a better idea of how ill your horse might be. All you need is a watch that counts seconds, a thermometer (ideally a plastic digital one for safety), and a stethoscope. (A notepad for recording is never a bad idea either!)

Adult Horse (resting values):*

- Temperature: 99-101°F (37.2-38.3°C)
- Pulse: 28-44 beats per minute
- Respiration (breathing rate): 10-24 breaths/min
- Mucous membranes (gums): Moist, healthy pink color
- Capillary refill time (time it takes for capillaries in the gums to return to pink after being pressed with a finger): Two seconds or less
- Gut sounds: Gurgling, gaslike growls, "tinkling" sounds (fluid), and occasionally "roars" (be able to describe sounds to your veterinarian)

Newborn Foals up to 2 days of age (resting values):*

- Temperature: 99.5-102.1°F (37.5-38.9°C)
- Pulse: 80-100 beats per minute
- Respiration (breathing rate): 20-40 breaths per minute
- Mucous membranes (gums): Moist, healthy pink color
- Capillary refill time: Two seconds or less

** If your horse's resting vital signs are not in these normal ranges, call your veterinarian to see what might be wrong. Remember that very hot and humid conditions may alter these normal values, so speak with your veterinarian.*

Common Vital Sign Mistakes

- Not leaving the thermometer in long enough (false low temperature reading)
- Taking vital signs on a nervous horse (horses' pulse and respiration rates can increase dramatically if they are nervous)
- Allowing the horse to sniff your hand to measure respiration rate (they will sniff far more quickly than their regular breathing rates)
- Double-counting heartbeats (lub-dub=one beat)
- Not regularly practicing on your horse to know what is normal!

Getting Ready to Feed More Stored Forage in the Fall and Winter.

As pasture season in the Northeast comes to an end it is time to start feeding more stored forages to meet nutritional needs of you horses. This should be a slow transition to limit the potential for colic in horses. As pasture availability decreases the amount to dry hay fed should be increased over a week or more and at multiple feedings and not just more at one feeding. Providing smaller amounts of hay at multiple feedings whether hay is fed in a stall or in a pasture will result in less feed wasted. With lower high quality hay supplies in the region due to extreme weather events this year conserving forage to make it through the winter will be an important part of your winter management. Another way to reduce loss is to feed hay in a tub or feed bunk, where you can also make sure that leaves, the most nutritional part, are also not lost to the ground or bedding.

If you are facing a short hay supply this fall and winter supplementing or replacing some of your forage requirements with hay pellets or cubes. Hay pellets or cubes are made from hay harvested at peak maturity, dried, chopped, and compressed. Hay cubes with longer particles are going to be better for replacing baled hay. Eventually you can feed 75% to 80% as much cubes as hay by weight, as a rule of thumb. As with changing from pasture to hay, if you choose to feed hay cubes you need to introduce them slowly.

Other Advantages of Hay Cubes

Lower dust and mold spores, Low moisture content, Longer shelf life than hay, Hold nutritional value longer, Easier to chew for older horses, Easier to digest, Less waste than hay, Easier to store, Easier food source for traveling with horses, More uniform nutrient values, More consistent in texture, and Better portion control.

Some Disadvantage of Hay Cubes

More expensive than hay, Chew time is less, Horses with [choke](#) or esophageal problems should have their cubes soaked, Must be extremely careful about portion control to avoid weight gain or loss and colic, Some horses do not like the texture of cubes.

Bourdeaus' and Bushey, Inc staff can help you pick a hay cube or find hay to feed this winter.

From the Horses eXtension learning community

Tuesday, November 29 -- Winter Care and Feeding for Your Horse

7 p.m. Eastern Time

Winter can be tough for some horses depending on age or the climate that they have been adapted to. Dr. Carey Williams, Rutgers University, will cover some key points about the care and feeding management of horses to help them have a happy and healthy winter.

<http://www.myhorseuniversity.com/node/561>

About webinars

A webinar is a web-based seminar. Instead of traveling somewhere to attend a seminar, you meet in a virtual conference room on the Internet

Oatmeal Molasses Cookies

2 cups brown-sugar oatmeal (dry)

Half-Cup grated carrots

3 tablespoons molasses

half cup brown sugar

Combine all these ingredients. Add enough water to make into soft dough. Stir well.

Put into oven on 365 degrees until golden brown

November Specials

**10% Off In-Stock Supplies of
Safe-Guard® Dewormer**

Gloves

Buckets

