

# Equine care discussion

## Introduction



For this week's discussion, I would like you to pick on disease or problem you may see in your horse, and describe what you would expect the vital signs, BCS, gut sounds, and changes in behavior to be that you could use to diagnose the issue. This discussion does not need to be very long, a few sentences will do.

## When

Spring 2020 semester | ADVS2190 | Kelli Munns

The Equine Care Discussion is an assessment of DK6. This assessment measures the student's ability to integrate knowledge from basic sciences to applications in the animal sciences by creating a discussion about an equine disease and expounding on the physiological components that would be used in a diagnosis.

Please turn in by Monday night by midnight (September 23rd)

## What



- Pick a disease (or illness such as colic, overheating at an event, etc)
- Please explain what you would see in that horses vital signs, what abnormal behavior you would expect, etc.
- Please explain what actions you would take immediately

## How



Work individually. Pick a illness, and go back in your course notes to look at the TPR and signs/symptoms that we talked about. Think about what your next steps in this case would be, and what you would do next in that situation.

## Why



Our goal is for you to leave this class not just knowing the facts presented, but to be able to critically think and apply what we have taught you - in this case taking what you've learned about vital signs, gut sounds, and other health measurements and apply it to what you've learned in disease.

## Example



I wanted to pick one we had not talked about: Neonatal isoerythrolysis (NI):

This condition is one where the mare has developed antibodies against the foals blood type. This can happen due to trauma during foaling, or other issues. The problem is that the mare gives the foal their "innate" immune system at the first feeding. The mare's first milk, or colostrum, contains antibodies for the foal. So if the foal ingests colostrum containing antibodies against its own blood type, the immune system will start destroying it's red blood cells.

This can occur anywhere from 12 hours to 5 days after the foal is born. The foal can have a fever (the act of the immune system thinking there is a threat) over 102.1 F. However, there is not always a fever. We probably won't see an increased respiratory rate, or pulse rate, and there will be no changes in gut sounds. However, we do see the urination change, partially because the foal's kidneys and liver are shutting down due to lack of oxygen. A big sign is jaundice, also due to the liver failure, which eventually can cause seizures as well. We expect to see lethargy, and weakness. The foal may be too weak to keep nursing, and overall will be much more tired than normal.

The first step would be to watch newborn foals closely, and to monitor the TPR of the foals anytime something seems off. If a foal is lethargic, you should take a temperature, and anytime a foal has a fever the vet should be immediately called. The foal's only hope is to get a blood donation from a gelding, and this is something the vet can give. Other infections may look like NI, so the key symptoms is the jaundice. Both the mare and the foal can also be tested for the antibodies, so that you could avoid this, or diagnose the problem.