

FEITM SPORTS FORUM

Dr Martha Mischeff.

Risk factors for heat related illness

- Big, heavily muscled horses
- High body condition score
- Unused to the work
- Cold to warmer climate
- Dark or long hair coat
- Maximal athletic effort
- Dehydration



Heat Exhaustion

- Less severe
- Subtle



vs

Heat Stroke

- More severe
- Obvious



Signs- Heat Exhaustion:

- Rapid breathing or panting,
- Increased heart rate
- Elevated rectal temperature $>40^{\circ}$ Celsius (104° Fahrenheit)
- Lethargic, depressed
-



Management of heat exhaustion

- Discontinue exercise
- Allow horse to drink
- Move to a shaded area with good air movement
- Cold water to the entire body



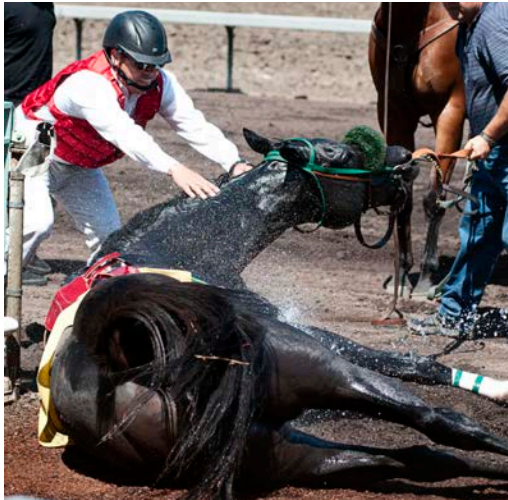
Signs- Heat Stroke:

- Altered mentation
- Aggressive behaviour
- Neurological signs
- Rear
- Strike
- Run over people



Heat Stroke- extremely dangerous behavior

- Uncontrollable
- Rear and flip over backwards



Management of heat stroke:

- Keep the horse moving towards a shaded, grassy area
- Once stopped they may collapse
- Repeatedly douse with ice water
- Cool the largest amount of body surface as rapidly as possible



Experienced veterinarians:

- Tranquilize the horse on the move
- Stabilize the horse
- Avoid NSAIDS prior to rehydration - kidney damage
- Avoid steroids - risk of laminitis



Managing the recumbent horse: Safety first!

- Safety for people and horse
- Experienced veterinarian should direct rescue efforts
- Work from dorsal aspect, away from the legs
- Keep the horse down to avoid repeated attempts to stand



Managing the recumbent horse

- Apply pressure behind the poll with one knee
- Towels to protect eye and facial nerve



Treating veterinarian may:

- Place iv catheter
- Administer large volumes of isotonic fluid iv

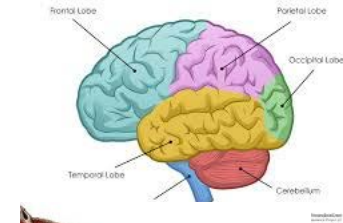
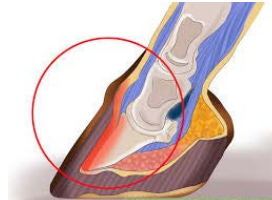
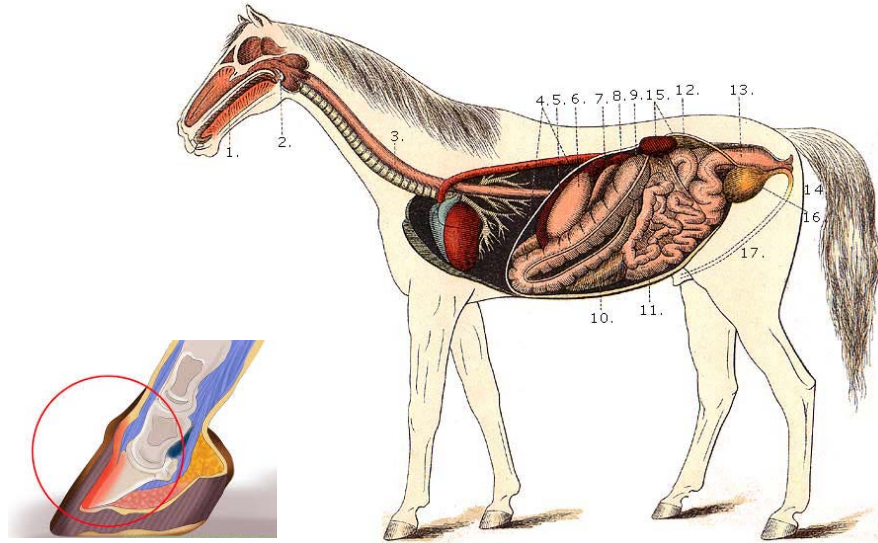
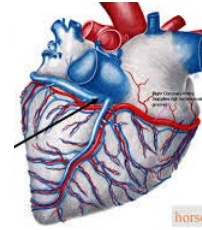
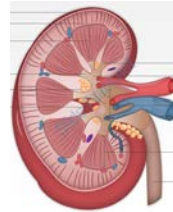


Cold water application is continued

Heat Stroke - a medical emergency

Fast and effective cooling needed to avoid permanent damage to:

- Kidneys
- Heart
- Lung
- Brain
- Muscles
- GI Tract
- Feet



Follow up monitoring:

- Heart rate < 50 within an hour
- Respiratory rate 18-24 within an hour

Ensure normal

- Temperature
- Urination
- Defecation
- Water consumption
- Appetite



Follow up monitoring:

Complete blood count,
biochemistry evaluation to check:

- Kidney function
- Hydration
- Muscle enzyme levels
- White blood cell values



Most horses make a speedy and complete recovery

- Prompt, appropriate treatment
- Good follow-up care



Thank You!

