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#### **Guidance for assessment of clinical parameters**

# **Mucous Membranes (A-D)**

- A- Pink, moist
- B- Pale pink/ less moist
- C- Darkened/Discoloured/Tacky- A MM score of C, with one or more additional parameters of concern, should call a Metabolic vote.
- D- Purple/Blue (cyanotic)- A MM score of D warrants a compulsory vote.

# Capillary Refill Time (1-4)

The number of seconds for colour to return to the mucous membranes of the gum after applying digital pressure to cause blanching. Counted as: one thousand one, one thousand two, etc.

- 1- One second- Normal
- 2- Two seconds- Normal capillary refill time should usually be less than two seconds.
- 3- A CRT of 3 seconds, with one or more additional parameters of concern, should call a Metabolic vote.
- 4- A CRT of 4 seconds warrants a compulsory vote.

# Skin Turgor (1-4)

Counted in seconds: one thousand one, one thousand two, etc.

This parameter is the least reliable of all recorded metabolic indices, as skin turgor varies considerably amongst horses due to age and skin elasticity, as well as hydration status. It should be measured at the point of the shoulder, but variability persists in the measured location amongst veterinarians.

# **Gut Sounds (A-D)**

- A- Normal auscultable motility
- B- Decreased auscultable motility
- C- Poorly discernible auscultable motility
- D- Absent auscultable motility

This parameter alone is not significant if the horse has presented in a short time. Blood is preferentially shunted to muscles during exercise, so many horses may have little or no auscultable motility when coming into the Horse Inspection Area directly from the course. On re-examination, after a rest period, or if the horse has taken 15-20 minutes to present initially, lack of auscultable GI motility is potentially more significant.

### Girth, back & withers soreness (A-C)

- A- No sensitivity when palpated with the flat of the hand, and no sign of any lesions
- B- Some sensitivity or a lesion that needs closer inspection and flagging up to keep an eye on.
- C- Marked soreness or recent open lesion. Warrants a compulsory vote.

### Muscle tone (A-C)

- A- Normal texture and no soreness on palpation (same phrasing as girth back withers)
- B- Firmer than normal texture and painful / soreness on palpation
- C- Hard/ firm/ solid texture, pain on palpation

# Gait (A-C)

- A- On the basis of rhythm, elasticity, vigour, and symmetry the horse doesn't give cause for concern and is fit to continue.
- B- Passable, maybe the odd inconsistent stride or needs to be trotted for a second opinion but passed. Often can be indicative of a tired/slightly dehydrated or electro. depleted horse not showing itself off very well.
- C- Is clearly lame. Warrants a compulsory vote.

### Soreness, lacerations and wounds

Any evidence of such in the mouth, limbs or any other body part including girth and saddle sores <u>MUST</u> be recorded on the Vet Card.