

Colic in Equine

By Amy K. McLean, Equine Specialist, University of Wyoming

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The term colic typically describes an equine having abdominal pain. It can be caused by numerous conditions. Typical signs of colic include excessive rolling, biting at the flanks, off feed, pawing the ground excessively, sweating, and then dropping to their knees to roll, raising the tail and attempting to defecate, or violently thrashing on the ground. Colic is normally considered an emergency and a veterinarian should be contacted immediately for treatment. One important factor when diagnosing colic is trying to determine the cause and location of impaction or distress. The severity of the case can vary from acute gas colic or impaction to severe cases requiring surgery. When treating colic cases treatment will depend on the severity of the case and the veterinarian will determine this. Some cases may only require prescribing a medication while other cases maybe as serious as requiring surgery so an owner should act quickly! Colic can be caused by internal parasites, rapid change of feed or feeding schedule, not consuming enough water, or by foreign objects such as enteroliths. An enterolith is a mineral concentration primarily of composed of calcium found in the gastrointestinal tract. In all cases if you think your horse is colicing contact your veterinarian immediately. Keep in mind some equine such as donkeys may actually show little signs of colic until it's too late for treatment. A good stockman should notice a change in their equine's behavior such as being off feed, the last to come in to eat, change in attitude, or decreased consumption in water.

For more information about treatment, diagnosis, and prevention of colic check out this webcast:

http://www.myhorseuniversity.com/resources/webcasts/colic_jan_10

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