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Emergency Kit

We at Greener Pastures Veterinary Clinic, Inc. have compiled an emergency kit for the continuing care of your horse. Enclosed is a compilation of medication and products that will enable you to help your horse in an emergency situation until veterinary care arrives.

Flunixin Meglumine Paste – Flunixin Meglumine is the medicine found in Banamine®. It is a NSAID (non steroidal anti-inflammatory drug) which helps with inflammation, pain and fever. It is commonly used to help relax the colon in gas colics so gas can pass. It also works well for injuries or soreness to alleviate pain, swelling and inflammation and to decrease fever. Please contact us prior to administration of Flunixin Meglumine to apprise us of the situation; we may advise to check a temperature before you administer it. Normal dose is 1 cc per 100 pounds in the mouth.

Phenylbutazone Paste – Phenylbutazone Paste or "Bute" paste is a common medicine used for pain or inflammation. It can be used for injuries, swellings or even to reduce fever – although Flunixin Meglumine usually works faster, Bute can sometimes work longer. Normal dose is 1-2 grams by mouth for a 1000 pound horse. For longer term use please contact us and we will give you a better idea of the dosage and the length of time needed for the particular problem.

Digital Thermometer – It is a good practice to know how to take your horse's rectal temperature. The enclosed thermometer should be turned on, inserted up to the screen into the horse's rectum and watched until the temperature stops rising and it beeps. It is safe practice to stand on one side or the other of the horse when taking the temperature to not expose you to the horse possibly kicking. Simply take the tail, move it to the opposite side, glance around and insert the thermometer—while standing to the side of the horse. If the horse's mucous membranes are dry you can apply a small amount of KY Jelly® to the tip of the thermometer for easier insertion. A horse's normal rectal temperature should be between 99.0° to 100.8°. Common clinical signs of fever can include your horse not eating, flared nostrils with heavier breathing, or listlessness. It is a good idea to check your horse's temperature before contacting us because we will probably request you do it and the information can help us decide if your horse needs to be evaluated or not.

Eye Ointment (Triple Antibiotic Ointment) – Swelling around the eyes, squinting, tearing, bluish to white discoloration in spots or over the entire eye can be signs of problems with the eyes. Inflammation, trauma, foreign bodies or ulcers (scratches) can be common eye emergencies. It is a good idea to attempt to look at the eye and flush it with saline to see if you can notice any abnormalities or obvious foreign bodies. This enclosed ointment is safe to use whatever the problem with the eye; however, it may not be the exact treatment needed. Therefore, it is advised to have all eye abnormalities evaluated by a veterinarian.

Furacin Spray – This spray can be used to topically cover wounds. It has an antibiotic in the spray and can help prevent infections in wounds that can not be wrapped. Likewise, you can spray it on injuries that are going to be wrapped to help protect it. If the wound is deep enough that it may require stitches, do not put anything in it besides KY Jelly® or water until we evaluate it. Take care whenever spraying aerosols around horses, some horses do not like the sound of the spray and can get nervous. Talking loudly or whistling while you spray sometimes does the trick.

Bandaging Material – Lower limb injuries are common in horses and the enclosed material will allow you to keep wounds clean and help stop bleeding. If the wound is bleeding heavily, apply 4 x 4s to wound, wrap with leg cotton and apply the vet wrap snugly. If it bleeds through the bandage material DO NOT remove the soaked bandage to reapply another. Keep the horse quiet and the pressure from the bandage will eventually give the laceration something on which to clot. If the wound is not bleeding heavily you should run cold water over it for 10-15 minutes then apply the bandage similar to above.

Lacerations – Other lacerations in area other than on the lower limbs are obviously difficult to impossible to bandage. Water, water, water is always a good rule of thumb and if the horse allow you to do so, flush the wound with cool water for 10-15 minutes or as long as the horse allows until we arrive. Keep in mind it is not worth the horse getting ANOTHER laceration while attempting to flush the original one. Another trick you can do is to apply KY Jelly® inside the wound after the water flushing. KY Jelly® is water soluble so it can keep the wound moist until we arrive but it is very easy to wash away. Do not put anything in it such as oil based ointments, iodine, hydrogen peroxide, etc... if you want us to sew up the laceration. Those products are either extremely difficult to wash away or are very irritating to the tissue and can decrease the possibility of it healing well.

Aluspray – This spray is a good covering for topical wounds or abrasions. If the wound is deep enough that it may require stitches, do not put anything in it besides KY Jelly® or water until we evaluate it.

KY Jelly® - We have already touched on two main reasons to have this: lubrication of a rectal thermometer for easier insertion and to put in wounds to keep them moist until we evaluate them.

Chlorhexidine Ointment – This is the same ingredient that is in Nolvasan Ointment. This is a good antibacterial ointment for wounds that will also help emolliate the skin. It is a good ointment to put on wounds prior to bandaging. As always, if the wound is deep enough that it may require stitches, do not put anything in it besides KY Jelly® or water until we evaluate it.

Chlorhexidine Scrub – This is a good antibacterial soap to use when washing any area on the horse (keep out of the eyes) and for cleansing wounds. You can use in conjunction with the scrub brush provided. The scrub brush is already impregnated with soap – but you can use this if you need additional soap for a particular wound or if the unopened scrub brush is not available.

This emergency medical kit will hopefully give you a head start on an emergency situation with your horse. This kit is in no way promoting you treat your horse in an emergency situation without medical supervision. Call us if there are any questions or if you need advice or further medical attention for your horse. You may also need to consider what to do with medical emergencies when you are out of town. Greener Pastures Veterinary Clinic, Inc. has created an emergency consent form that you can fill out to help assist the people remaining to watch and care for your horses. The form will help you and your care givers to decide how to handle emergency situations. Call us for more information.