

Suzette Bernadine Belgarde explains important equestrian health care

From teeth and hooves, vaccination and worming, to monitoring body condition, there's a lot to take in when it comes to equestrian health care.

FARIBAULT, MINNESOTA, UNITED STATES, September 6, 2018 /EINPresswire.com/ -- An [equestrian expert](#) and advocate of [equine-assisted therapy](#) from Faribault, Minnesota, Suzette Bernadine Belgarde has many years of experience working with horses. Here, she addresses several of the primary areas of general [equestrian health care](#), starting with vaccination.

"All horses should be vaccinated against conditions such as tetanus, strangles, and viral respiratory disease. A good veterinarian will be able to advise horse owners, especially those new to the field, on what to vaccinate against, and how often," explains Suzette Belgarde.

Moving on to hooves and teeth, Belgarde advises having a farrier trim the hooves every 6-8 weeks. "This prevents them from chipping or becoming uncomfortable for the horse," she adds. "Horseshoes are only really necessary if an owner plans to take the animal riding on rocky or otherwise hard ground."

Much like their human caregivers, horses should have their teeth checked by a horse dentist at least once per year, according to Belgarde. "Young horses, under five years of age, or any horse regularly fed on grain should receive a dental check at least once every six months," the equestrian expert adds.

Suzette Belgarde is also keen to stress that worming is essential for all horses. "Most treatments only last 6-8 weeks, so it's vital to keep on top of it," she says. "Always read the instructions as dosage amounts and frequency can vary between worming treatment brands."

Good horse husbandry, says Belgarde, relies heavily on monitoring body condition. "A horse should never be allowed to get too fat or too thin," she explains. "One way to ensure good condition is to look at a horse's ribs. If the ribs are visible, a horse is too thin. Ideally, you should not be able to see them, but you should be able to feel them."

According to Suzette Belgarde, if a horse's ribs cannot be easily felt, then the animal is likely overweight. "Look up condition scoring of horses for further information," she adds.

Lastly, the equine-assisted therapy advocate highlights two fairly common but serious health



problems affecting horses. "First is laminitis, which occurs in horses and ponies which are too heavy. An excruciating hoof condition, if laminitis isn't addressed quickly, it can become untreatable and may lead to an affected horse needing to be euthanized, unfortunately," the expert reveals.

"Second is colic," she continues. "Colic can be extremely serious, with death a very real consequence."

Symptoms according to Belgarde include regularly lying down or frequently rolling, grinding of teeth, general restlessness, or horses repeatedly kicking at their flanks or sides.

"Colic is not to be underestimated in horses," she adds, wrapping up, "and if you suspect your animal is affected, it's absolutely vital that you seek urgent veterinary attention."

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