

Wounds are very commonly seen within veterinary practices and should always be reviewed / discussed with a vet, no matter how big or small.

Common Types of Wounds

Abrasions:

Superficial wounds caused by friction, such as rubbing against a fence, or none at all. They typically affect only the outer layer of skin (epidermis) and may result in minor bleeding.

Treatment: Generally, heal quickly with proper cleaning and topical applications.

Lacerations:

Deep cuts or tears in the skin that can vary in size and depth. These wounds are often caused by sharp objects or blunt trauma and may bleed heavily.

Treatment: Require thorough assessment, cleaning and possibly suturing by a veterinarian to ensure proper healing.

Puncture Wounds:

Small holes caused by sharp objects, such as nails or sticks. These wounds can appear minor but may penetrate deeply and cause significant underlying damage to important structures e.g. joints.

Treatment: Should be left open and regularly flushed to prevent infection, as they are prone to complications.

Avulsions:

Partial or complete tearing away of skin and underlying tissue. A specific type of avulsion is a degloving injury, where a section of skin is completely torn away from the underlying tissue.

Treatment: These injuries often require immediate veterinary care due to their severity and potential for complications.

Horses are prone to various injuries, and wounds can be caused by:


Kicks and falls

Accidental injuries

Traumatic events

TREATMENTS

Emergency first aid until the vet arrives - Ensure that you have a full and up to date first aid kit to hand ensuring you have all the required materials to manage the wound until the veterinary surgeon arrives.

 **Call the veterinary surgeon** - no matter what the wound, a call to the veterinary practice is ALWAYS recommended. They will be able to assess the situation and make decisions on the most relevant course of action / treatment generally, following a visit to the horse.

The veterinary surgeon will assess the wound, clip, clean and flush the wound, possibly stitch it up and / or, bandage the leg. They may leave antibiotics and also anti-inflammatories and recommend a period of stable rest for the horse depending on the nature and location of the wound.

If bandaging is required, the veterinary surgeon will monitor the wound closely, changing the bandages every 2-3 days to prevent infection or bandage rubs. If the wound is sutured, the sutures will need removed, providing all goes well, 10-14 days later.

Tetanus vaccination - It is important to ensure that your horse is vaccinated for tetanus as this can be a serious and fatal condition should your horse contract a wound and not have any protection. If this is the case, your veterinary surgeon would need to give a tetanus anti-toxin which can be costly.



- 1) **Stop the bleeding:** Apply pressure with a clean cloth or bandage to stop any bleeding.
- 2) **Clean the wound:** Use a hose or clean bucket of water to gently clean away any mud, dirt or blood allowing a clear visual of the wound.
- 3) **Assess the wound:** Check for signs of infection, pain, or lameness. Check the size and if the wound is deep or near vital structures so you can inform the veterinary surgeon. Take photographs of the wound for the veterinary surgeon.
- 4) **Call the veterinary practice:** Contact your veterinary practice who will provide advice and attend the wound.