

Panting, inversion Laboured, abnormal

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The Horse Health Check

Wounds/Saddle/Girth No visible marks

Heat/swelling/tenderness Pain/raw/bleeding

Muscles/Back

Tight or tender

Very tight or tender

Relaxed

Rectal Temperature

<38.6 °C pre-ride <39.6 °C during ride 39.5-40.4 °C during ride >40.5 °C

Stop!

Caution!

Go!

Anal Tone

Tight Slightly loose Anus/penis relaxed

Joints/Legs

No heat or swelling **Heat/swelling** Pain/raw bleeding

Impulsion

Free, willing, eager **Stumble/short stride** Stiffness/limping

Gut Sounds

Normal sounds

Reduced/increased

Absent or abnormal sounds

Heart Rate

(after strenuous exercise)

<68 in **10** minutes

68 in 10-30 minutes

>68 in 30 minutes

<u>Gait</u>

No abnormal gait Slight gait change **Consistent gait change** or non-weight bearing

Attitude

Bright/eating/drinking Depressed/lethargic

Dull, not interested, absence of thirst, appetite, urination or defecation

The Horse Health Check

<u>Directions:</u> As you are performing the Horse Health Check, record your observations on the following table by placing them in the appropriate category (green, yellow, red). Then record your results and any other important comments into your permanent stable records on each horse.

Parameter	Green	Yellow	Red	Comments
Eyes				
Capillary Refill				
Mucous Membranes				
Jugular Refill				
Skin Pinch				
Heart Rate				
Respiratory Rate				
Gut Sounds				
Wounds/Saddle/Girth				
Muscles/Back				
Rectal Temperature				
Anal Tone				
Joints/Legs				
Gait				
Attitude				
Impulsion				

These parameters can be recorded on a resting horse to determine basic health and during or after exercise/competition. The heart rate recovery refers to the heart rate after exercise. If any of the parameters are in the yellow zone, you should stop exercising your horse and check out the horse carefully and medical assistance may be necessary. If any parameter is in the red zone, you should consult with your veterinarian as soon as possible, as medical treatment may be necessary.