



The Equi-Health Canada / Equi-First Aid USA primary equine emergency first aid course was developed about 12 years ago by a group of equine professionals - veterinarians (primarily Dr. Brian Taylor and Dr. David Dempsey), equine dentists, farriers, chiropractors, massage therapists..... and a few old back country outfitters. It was developed with the purpose of helping horse owners learn how to best attend their horse in an emergency situation, recognize pain in the horse, be able to properly assess vital signs, note hoof issues early on, and deal with an injury post-vet care.

The course is the equivalent of St. Johns Ambulance or the Red Cross - but for horses. Primary first aid while waiting for a vet, and providing the vet or attending with valid and helpful information. It is recognized by Equine Canada for professional development credits, the provincial and state Associations of Veterinary Technicians for Continuing Education credits, and by many insurance companies for favorable equine mortality insurance rates.

While I don't like to give a formal schedule to clients as things alter with questions, problem areas, etc., here is the general flow of the day:

9:30 am start - casual meet and greet - collect waiver forms, a brief welcome and a couple slides.

We then cover prevention – eye clarity and atlas check, pain detection on the horse, some simple techniques to alleviate back pain before you saddle up, stretching to help prevent suspensory and tendon injuries. Relieving pain and tension in the horse before riding can eliminate most cold back!! This is done as a demo on one horse - then the group will do in the afternoon with scenarios.

We then will talk about conditioning a horse to accept treatment - the worst time to train a horse to accept treatment.... is when he needs treatment! We will use spray bottles here, simulate clippers, work with touching the horse everywhere, take vital signs and demo weighing a horse (without a weight tape!) so not to under/over dose him.

We then have a break and move into the 'classroom'. We then go through a series of slides depicting true emergencies and talk about the process with each situation - lacerations, punctures, eye issues, casting. This is to prepare the group for afternoon hands on scenarios.

Time permitting a demo is done on a horse showing bandaging, and how to build a temporary boot for those off in the back country or policing an abscess. (after lunch if running slow)

Break for lunch

After lunch we move into scenario work. We first check the horses for pain spots and stretch them out (from the AM demo). We then have 8 scenarios that we do in groups - max 4 per horse. These are done as if they were real - 'wounds' are cleaned, wound gel used, bandages applied. There is also a scenario for vital signs where the group must weigh a horse and take all

his vitals. The purpose is to encourage muscle memory through repetition so when faced with a real emergency - the body takes over.

After scenarios we take a quick break.

The day finishes out with:

Digestive and breathing emergencies - colic, choke, COPD/ROA, collapse – detection and action.

Hoof issues - while this is not emergency - no hoof, no horse - so we cover recognizing and dealing with thrush, white line, abscess, founder, stone bruising, thrush, etc.

The day ends with open sharing of 'pantry solutions' - home remedies that folks have tried with their horses and for what purpose - cream for flushing dirt from eyes, spray pam to prevent snow balls on feet, tea and aspirin to toughen hooves..... you name it! This is usually around 430 when we finish up.

The course per person to the public is \$159+tax and includes all materials for the day, an equine emergency first aid reference manual, a 'normal vs abnormal cheat card', and a frame-able certificate of completion.

We offer an advanced first aid course covering major injuries and conditions that would be catastrophic without immediate intervention on the part of the horse owner (fractures, sucking chest wounds, tie up, heat stroke, hypothermia, and so much more), as well as optional "wilderness" component for adventurous riders.

As for the kids first aid course, it's a 3 hour version of the basic called "I Can Help" - Horse First Aid for Kids. It's 100% hands on - no powerpoint – tons of interactive fun and focusses on simplified first aid, safety around horses, the importance of calling a grown up, etc. For those..... we bring extra vet wrap, the kids do the horses up as if they're being shipped to the otherside of the world. This is geared to ages 5-9.

We have many other options for all ages and abilities, and have safety courses in are area of disaster planning, safe trailering, and basic farm safety for people new to the horse world. The main website has a full listing and description of all available training. www.equihealthcanada.com for Canadians (all materials are available in both official languages) or www.equi-firstaid.com for Americans.

I hope I've covered everything - but feel free to call or email with any other questions!

Have a wonderful day -