

HOW TO GIVE AN INTRAVENOUS (IV) INJECTION TO A HORSE

PRECAUTIONS TO TAKE

Handler – Giving injections is not without risk. Harm to the horse or yourself can easily occur if adequate care is not taken. Always wear gloves if directed by your veterinarian.

Medication – Read the drug label thoroughly prior to giving any medications to ensure the directions are correct. Check the drug type, dose, route and expiry.

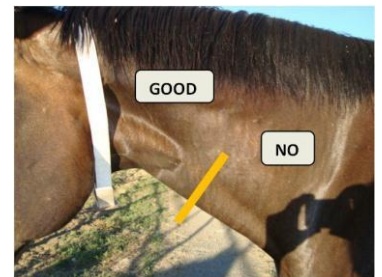
Equipment – Always use a fresh sterile needle and syringe for each injection.

SITES FOR INTRAVENOUS INJECTIONS

Website link to a video showing how to give an IV injection:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W_jjdrAU1RU

- Intravenous injections are required for certain medications or antibiotics and it is important that they are given correctly.
- Draw up single dose of medication required and then place a new needle on the syringe
- Find the jugular vein
 - Locate the jugular groove running down the left side of your horse's neck.
 - Using LEFT thumb, hold off the vein 3-6" below the intended injection site
 - Watch for the rise of the vein (repeat steps several times to ensure you can see vein rising and falling)
- IV injections should always be given in the upper half of the neck



PROCEDURE

- Wet the hair with alcohol/water in area that the needle is to be placed (~1/3 way down the neck from the head)
- Remove the needle from the syringe and always have the bevel (hole) of the needle facing towards you

- Hold the vein up with your LEFT hand and using your RIGHT hand, sharply stab the needle through the skin and insert at a 45 degree angle into the vein
- There should be a slow drip of dark coloured blood from the needle hub
 - If there is rapid spurting of bright red blood then you are likely in the carotid vein -> remove the needle and start again in an area 1 inch more cranial (towards the head).
- Once in the vein, attach the syringe. Draw back to ensure there is a flash of blood into the syringe. Slowly administer medication occasionally drawing back to get a flash of blood ensuring you are still in the vein.
 - If there is a large lump forming under the skin around where the needle is inserted you are likely injecting the medication under the skin -> remove the needle and start again.
- Properly dispose of your needle and syringe in a safe medical waste container

TIPS

- Once you have found the area you are going to inject, pinching a small piece of skin between the thumb and forefinger nails for 30sec can numb the area -> place the needle directly into this area of skin
- Once you have found the vein and orientated the needle PLACE IT! Pricking the patient repeatedly without placing the needle will cause the horse to become impatient and fidgety.
- Penicillin should NEVER be given intravenously

This information sheet is not intended as a substitute for a veterinary consultation. It is recommended that a consultation be arranged with a Veterinarian if you have any concerns with your horse's health.