

TREATMENT OF WOUNDS

Wounds include open cuts (lacerations) grazes (abrasions) and bruises.

A simple first aid kit should be kept by all donkey owners in a clean air tight container labelled DONKEY FIRST AID KIT. This should contain gauze swabs, cotton wool (for foot poultices only), animalintex poultices, mild antiseptic/cleansing solution (equine), mild antiseptic cream (equine), round ended scissors, cohesive bandage (vet rap), latex gloves, thermometer, vet's/farrier's number, date of last tetanus injection (in case someone else is looking after donkeys). This enables you to treat wounds quickly and efficiently. Always replace used items as soon as possible.

FIRST STEPS

If you should find your donkey with a wound, the first step you should take is to prevent further injury. Catch the donkey and calm him. If your donkey is frightened, ensure your own safety when handling him. Always take care when examining wounds, especially those on the limbs.

WHEN TO CALL THE VET

You should seek veterinary advice if there is:

- Excessive bleeding (haemorrhage). Wounds on the lower legs can bleed profusely. Apply a pressure bandage before calling the vet. This can be achieved by bandaging firmly with gauze pads to stem the flow of blood
- Penetration or puncture through the entire skin thickness
- A wound close to a joint
- A severe wound at or below knee level
- Wound contamination such as that from dirt or other material
- Bruises, lumps, swelling and inflammation (in the absence of an obvious wound) may be the result of an underlying problem, and veterinary advice should also be sought

If your donkey is not up to date with his tetanus vaccinations, he may require a tetanus antitoxin injection and booster vaccination so contact your vet.

WOUND ACTION PLAN

Action until the vet arrives, or for minor wounds:

- Bathe the wound with tepid, clean water – this has the added benefits of cleaning the wound, stemming bleeding and reducing the swelling
- Cleanse the wound fully using a gauze pad and antiseptic wound solution diluted according to the instructions on the pack
- Any hair around the wound may need to be cut back to ensure the wound remains clean
- Do not use sprays or powders unless specifically instructed by your veterinary surgeon as these may drive any remaining dirt deeper into the wound

Seek veterinary advice if you are concerned that the wound may be infected. If the vet has been called and he recommends that the wound is bandaged you should monitor it daily for unpleasant discharge or smell.

N.B: a badly bandaged leg will cause more harm than good so please seek expert advice.

When the bandage is removed, monitor daily for contamination or insect infestation.

Healing wounds may cause irritation to your donkey. If self-trauma occurs (biting, rubbing, itching at the wound site) seek advice from your veterinary surgeon.