

Care of Horses with Dressings



Keep the bandage or dressings clean and dry THIS IS VERY IMPORTANT.

Unless otherwise advised by the vet, box rest is generally required.

The Function of a Bandage

The bandage needs to be secure, comfortable, firm and applied properly. There are many reasons why your horse may require a bandage or dressing including the following:

- Stop self-trauma of a wound while healing.
- Protect a wound from the environment.
- Support a fracture.
- Reduce contamination of a wound.
- Reduce swelling.
- Give comfort and pain relief whether or not there is a wound present.

Bandage Problems

These can easily occur so check the bandage frequently and call for advice if you have any concerns.

The main problems that occur include:

- **The bandage becomes wet or soiled.** This reduces ventilation through the bandage and the tissues underneath can become unhealthy and even infected.
- **The bandage slips.** If this occurs it will no longer offer support, the primary dressing may not cover the wound and pressure becomes uneven. This may cause serious rubs.
- **Bandage tightening.** This can be due to the dressing becoming wet or swelling of the tissues underneath the bandage. You may notice swelling developing just above a bandaged limb. An overly tight bandage can cause severe tissue damage or even gangrene.
- **Pressure sores** over bony prominences (knee and hock being most common) are also a potential problem, especially if a dressing is required over an extended period. These can become serious wounds if untreated.
- **Damage to the bandage or dressing** often due to chewing, kicking or rubbing. In the first instance check for any reason the bandage has become uncomfortable. Applying a foul-tasting solution such as 'Crib-Off' to the outside of the bandage can deter a horse from chewing it.

When changing a bandage always seek help and make sure the horse is safely restrained.

Wear disposable gloves to reduce infection risk and dispose carefully of any soiled dressings.

If you note any of these changes then urgent advice from your vet should be sought.

Telephone 01282 868 748 (office hours) or 01282 863 892 (out of hours).

