



Your Horse's Vital Signs






(USPC D Manual 2nd Ed. , p224)

Name: TEACHER COPY Date _____

Helpful supplies:

- equine thermometer, latex gloves (any plastic/rubber gloves will do)
- picture/poster of horse to show where to take pulse
- watches with second hand for practicing pulse taking

**** ASK:** What does TPR mean? and Does it have other names? ("Vital Signs", "Vitals", as in "What are the horse's vitals?")

1. Temperature  What is this? ___The degree of **heat** inside horse's body
2. Pulse  What is this? ___how fast his **heart** is beating
3. Respiration Rate  What is this? ___how fast he is **breathing**

WHY should you know your horse's vital signs?

- * Shows if the pony is **healthy, fit, conditioned**
- * When not normal, your horse may be **ill / sick**

What to do for your horse:

- 1) 1 Know what is **NORMAL** for your horse
- 2) Take **2** readings when you know your horse is healthy.
 - a) Take one reading at **REST**
 - b) Take another after **EXERCISE**
- 3) ___Write it down in your **record book** & **stall** Card ___
- 4) ___Take his vital signs if you think he is **ill**___



D3: Describe the normal range of vital signs (TPR) of a mount at rest.

- *SAY: We are going to learn how to take all 3 of these vital signs*

Temperature



What is a normal equine temperature? 98,5 to 101 (it is listed incorrectly in the USPC D manual)

When is it lowest? in the morning (same with humans) _____

When is it higher? later in the day _____

In what area of the horse is the temp taken? rectally _____

What equipment is used? a vet thermometer with a ring and string (sometimes a clip) _____



- *Show the thermometer. Show how to read the mercury. If digital, show how to turn it on, read it, & reset it. Let each member try.*

***A glass thermometer is more accurate than a digital, but either will work.*

➤ *Explain to dip in Vaseline, explain why. Explain about gloves.*

➤ *Show how to clean it and why (biohazard from one horse to another) and how to store it.*

**As of 2013, the US Pony Club no longer allows glass/mercury thermometers in the team rally box.*

Why do you need a special thermometer?  Clip or tie string to horses' tail/ wait 2-3 minutes. **Keeps the thermometer from sliding into the horse, or falling onto the ground**

Pulse



What is a normal equine pulse rate? between 30 and 45 beats per minute _____

In what area of the horse can the pulse be found easily? press lightly on the facial artery (crosses the jawbone) ***Show poster of Horse, point out spots to find pulse*

What is the formula for figuring the pulse rate? Look at watch & count how many beats in 15 seconds. Multiply this by 4 to get the pulse (heart rate)

e=mc²

***Have each student find their own pulse.*

***Using the watch, you count out 15 seconds and have them figure their own heart rate.*

***Have them try to find a partner's pulse and calculate*

Respiration Rate



What is a normal equine respiration rate? between 8 and 16 breaths per minute

In what area of the horse can you count the respiration rate? by LOOKING at either his flank or nostrils.

-by LOOKING at either his flank or nostrils.

-Count either IN or OUT breath, not both, for 15 seconds.

***Point out the flank on the horse poster*



What is the formula for figuring the respiration rate? Multiply by 4

***Have each student count the IN or OUT breaths of a partner & calculate*

Review: Ask the students -

- 1) *What are the 3 vital signs you should know?*
- 2) *How are these 3 vital signs abbreviated?*
- 3) *What does temperature measure?*
 - a. *What is a normal horse temp when at rest?*
- 4) *What does the Pulse measure?*
 - a. *What is a normal horse pulse?*
- 5) *What does Respiration measure?*
 - a. *What is a normal horse respiration?*
- 6) *When should you take your horse's TPR*
- 7) *Where should you write down your horse's resting TPR?*

Rating Requirements:

D2- Know what TPR stands for

D3 - Know vital signs of mount at rest.

C1 - Know the acceptable ranges for temperature, pulse, and respiration for a mount at rest and the importance of these numbers.

C2 - Know vital signs of own mount at work. AND Measure and record pulse, temperature and respiration of own mount at rest with assistance if necessary.

