

Care for the mare and foal during foaling

Overview

This standard covers caring for the mare and foal during foaling. It also covers caring for the mare prior to foaling and the care of the mare and foal immediately after foaling.

You will need to be able to prepare suitable facilities and equipment, care for the mare and foal throughout, respond to signs of imminent foaling and obtain professional advice and help when this is required. You will need to be fully aware of the importance of health, safety and animal welfare in connection with this activity.

You will need to be able to recognise hazards and assess risks in the workplace.

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Performance criteria

You must be able to:

1. select and wear appropriate clothing and personal protective equipment for the activity
2. prepare suitable facilities and equipment for foaling a mare
3. care for the mare prior to foaling, according to instructions
4. monitor the mare and respond to signs of imminent foaling
5. care for the mare during foaling and seek professional advice immediately if you suspect an abnormal or difficult foaling
6. take appropriate action when abnormal signs of health and behaviour are identified
7. check the placenta after foaling
8. sustain care of the mare and foal for the 24 hours following foaling
9. maintain suitable levels of hygiene and bio-security
10. ensure waste is disposed of safely and correctly
11. monitor and maintain the health and safety of yourself and others, and the welfare of the horse and foal, during the activity

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Knowledge and understanding

You need to know and understand:

1. the selection, use and care of personal protective equipment
2. the types of facilities and equipment required to care for the mare and foal during foaling
3. the requirements for foaling in the stable and the field
4. the signs of imminent foaling and the correct actions to take
5. the different stages of labour
6. abnormal presentation and when to seek help
7. abnormal signs of health and behaviour and the appropriate action to take, including reporting the signs and seeking assistance
8. the reasons for checking the placenta after foaling and problems concerning retention
9. the use of closed-circuit television and mare alarms
10. the procedures immediately following parturition
11. the importance of maintaining hygiene and bio-security during foaling, and the methods for achieving this
12. the risks to horses, yourself and others and how these are controlled
13. your responsibilities under relevant animal health and welfare and health and safety legislation and codes of practice.

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Glossary

Facilities and equipment:

- stabling
- bedding
- lighting
- phone and relevant phone numbers
- head collar
- rugs
- colostrum
- first aid kit

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