

REDUCING BODY TEMPERATURE — IN THE HORSE —

by Dr. Laura Harris

Normal body temperature for a horse should be between 99 F and 101 F.

Body temperature in a horse is critically low between 96 F and 97 F.

Body temperature in a horse is critically high between 102 F and above.

Body temperature in a horse is measured using a thermometer inserted rectally and kept in place for at least one minute. Human thermometers may be used.

Suggestions:

- 1) Phenylbutazone ("bute") and Flunixin meglumine ("Banamine") are both non-steroidal anti-inflammatory medications that are potent fever reducers in appropriate cases.
- 2) Rinsing with water from the hose is beneficial if applied for long enough periods. Remember, you need to reduce the horse's core temperature, not just the skin temperature. In the summer months, this process may take as long as one hour per degree in body core temperature reduction.
- 3) Ice boots applied for 30 minutes at a time on two or four legs can be used at 30 minute intervals for as long as it takes to reduce core body temperature. (30 minutes on / 30 minutes off / etc.)
- 4) Evaporative cooling blankets are now available. These blankets work extremely well, use less water than rinsing with the hose, and can be left on an unattended horse.

Sources:

www.coolingapparel.com.au/animals.htm

www.mmci.us/cool_vest/special.html

www.hobbyhillfarm.com