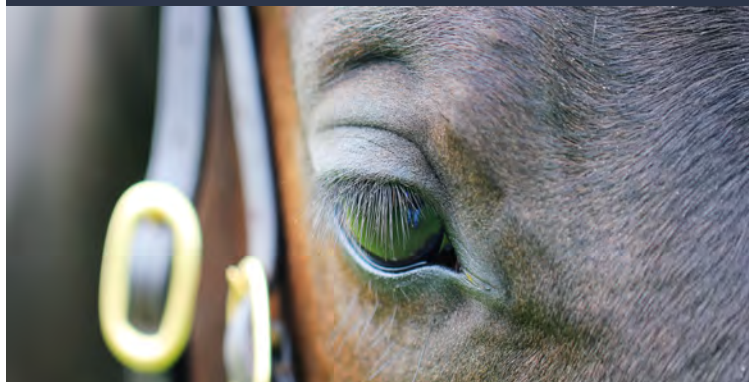


MENTAL WELLBEING

To assess our horses “happiness” we need to understand what is important to the horse. For a feral horse, a ‘happy’ emotional state would come from the interaction with their herd. This can look different for the domesticated horse, but the need for social interaction remains.

How would I know if my horse is happy? The table opposite shows some positive and negative behaviour traits to look out for, these could help you monitor changes in their emotional wellbeing. We must remember though, that no two horses have the same influences in life, such as intensity of work or physical health.



IF THERE IS A CHANGE FROM POSITIVE TO NEGATIVE

Can you easily understand why? Is there a reason? For example, if there is a lack of interest in food, are they having difficulty eating due to dental pain or does their diet need reassessing? Is there a lack of interaction, could this be because other horses have joined or left the yard? Is your horse grumpy when being tacked up? Could this be due to discomfort? Please contact us to help you decide on the best course of action.

EMOTIONAL ASSESSMENT OF THE HORSE

Positive	Negative
Greeting you in the same way each day.	Withdrawn, dull or depressed e.g. standing in the corner of the stable with head down.
Spending most of their day grazing or eating roughage.	Not interested in food.
Interacting with other horses e.g. they can see other horses from their stable, share a field or can see other horses from their field.	Showing stereotypical behaviour such as crib biting, box walking or weaving.
Mutual grooming with other horses and regular grooming from owner.	Staying away from other horses in the field or being grumpy when groomed.
Expressing themselves in their usual way.	Becoming grumpy or aggressive.
Happy and attentive when ridden, driven or exercised.	Grumpy when tacking up or objecting to being ridden, driven or exercised (this could be physical)
Relaxed expression on their face both in the stable and when moving or ridden, driven or exercised.	Tension around their muzzle and eyes.

Table above and mental wellbeing paragraph from the BHS

Call reception to discuss your horse’s dental plan. We have several options available.
0808 168 5580 or 01254 888 600

USEFULL CONTACT DETAILS

British Equine Veterinary Association
(www.beva.org.uk)

World Horse Welfare (www.worldhorsewelfare.org)

Blue Cross bereavement support service
(www.bluecross.org.uk)

British Horse Society - Friends at the end scheme
www.bhs.org.uk/our-work/welfare/our-campaigns/friends-at-the-end



Equine Clinic, Rathmell, North Yorkshire.
BD24 0LA
0808 168 5580

Crabtree Clinic, Lupton, Kirkby Lonsdale
LA6 1PJ
0808 168 5580

Martholme Clinic, Great Harwood, Lancashire.
BB6 7UJ
01254 888 600

office@nwev.co.uk



PHYSICAL WELLBEING

The way that you assess the physical wellbeing of your horse can be influenced by many factors. For example, are they recovering from an injury? Are they an older horse? Do they have a long or short term condition? This list will help you identify if your horse is comfortable or needs veterinary assistance.

If any of these questions have raised concern, you should speak to your vet. The vet will be able to assess your horse and put in place a plan of action to help improve their condition.

CONSIDERATIONS FOR PHYSICAL HEALTH

- Is your horse maintaining a healthy weight? (see our body condition scoring chart)
- Can your horse still perform normal movement with ease, e.g., rolling, getting down or standing up?
- Is your horse as active as normal? Are they stiff or reluctant to walk? Do they lay down for long periods, or not at all?
- Can your horse stand comfortably, with weight on all four feet?
- Has your horse lost weight or muscle condition? (take into consideration their age and workload)
- Is your horse happy to accept the bit if they are still being ridden?
- Does your horse feel different when ridden?
- Have your horse's eating and drinking habits changed?
- Is your horse on long term medication?

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QUALITY *of life*



As horse owners, sometimes the most difficult judgement we have to make is to assess quality of life. We know and love our horses, and as such we must be able to honestly translate the information they give us to determine their quality of life.

This can be difficult, especially when we see our horses every day.

There are two main elements that we must consider, physical health and mental wellbeing. When you are able to monitor these on a regular basis, it can give a clear picture of your horse's quality of life.

