



WHAT'S UP DOC?

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Snakes!? Why'd it have to be snakes?

Having had a warmer than normal spring, and with the heat of summer just around the corner, now is a good time to become familiarized with the dangers of venomous snakes. Snakes are more active during the warm months of the year, and in our region snakes are generally a threat from April through October.

Due to their curious nature, horses are most often bitten on the nose, however bites can occur almost anywhere else, including the limbs. Keep in mind that the exact location of a bite may not be visible, depending on factors such as the presence of fur. Also be aware that there are not always two punctures for a snake bite, and that venom is not always released when a venomous snake bites.



Profuse swelling of the tissues surrounding the bite is often observed within minutes, and since most bites occur on the nose, swelling of the muzzle is most often seen. This may have life-threatening consequences, as bites in this anatomic region may cause the nasal passages to swell shut, keeping the horse from being able to breathe. In addition to swelling, the bite location may ooze dark bloody fluid if not swollen shut, and the skin of the bite location may also develop diffuse reddening or red spots. Less common, but more serious signs that may occur shortly after a bite include paralysis, respiratory distress, and prolonged bleeding.

Other complications can take several days to appear following a bite, including local tissue necrosis that causes the skin and/or muscle to die and slough, leaving large open wounds where secondary infection may occur; dry bites, or bites where venom is not released, may also cause infection and colic.

Use caution when putting a halter on and handling the horse; snake bite victims are often very nervous and hyper-reactive. Call your veterinarian immediately if you suspect your horse has been bitten by a snake. Most snake bites are treatable with conservative management such as anti-inflammatory therapy and supportive care, however immediate veterinary evaluation significantly increases the chance of a successful outcome.

Meet our new staff members!!

Sarah Hall is from Upstate New York. She went to SUNY Morrisville and SUNY Cobleskill for her Bachelor's Degree in Equine science then moved to Colorado in 2012 to attend her internship at the Colorado Therapeutic Riding Center. Once officially graduated from college Sarah decided to stay in Colorado. She started working at a small animal vet clinic in Boulder where she worked for 5 years. Now Sarah lives in Wiggins with her husband Isaac, 2 ponies, 3 dogs, and 4 cats. She enjoys fixing up her 100 year old farm house and spending time with all of the animals.



Charley Armstrong, C.V.T. grew up on the central coast of California in a small town called Carmel Valley. Charley has always owned horses and grew up competing in high school and college rodeos. After attending Feather River College, Charley moved to Colorado in 2014 to pursue her love for veterinary medicine. After attending Bel-Rea for two years she graduated with her AAS in Veterinary Technology. She recently passed her test to be a Certified Veterinary Technician. When Charley is not at Countryside, she enjoys spending time with her black lab Cash and running barrels on her horse Jig.

