

Average Normal Equine Values

Heart Rate

Adults: 25-40 beats per minute

Foals: 80-100 beats per minute

The heart rate is taken low on the left side of the horse in the area of the girth or just in front of the girth area in the "arm pit". The lub-dub sound heard through the stethoscope is one beat. Heart rate can also be taken by feeling the pulse on the under side of the horse's lower jaw.

Respiratory Rate

Adults: 8-20 breaths per minute

Foals: 20-60 breaths per minute

The respiratory rate can be taken by:

- watching the horse's ribs rise and fall
- placing your hand just in front of the horse's nose and feeling the exhaled air
- watching the nostrils flare with each inhaled breath.

Temperature

Adults: 99.5-101.5°F

Foals: 99.0-102.5°F

Because the temperature is generally taken rectally, it is recommended to use a small amount of lubricant such as petroleum jelly or saliva.

Mucous Membranes

Normal membranes should be pale pink to pink in color and moist to the touch. Lift the upper lip and observe the gum color.

Capillary Refill Time

Less than or equal to 2 seconds. Firmly press your finger on the upper gum to blanch the tissue and count how long it takes for the color (blood capillaries) to return.