

What causes colic in horses

Colic in babies may just be an ordinary occurrence for their parents. After all, colic happens to almost everybody and after getting used to the screaming and the shouting and the crying, the illness will be as normal as eating and sleeping.

The same cannot be said of colic in horses. Yes. Horses also get colicky. In fact, this is considered as a nightmare for every horse-keeper because it can really become serious when not attended immediately. For while some horses respond to therapy and medical treatment, most will deteriorate even after being treated by a veterinarian.

Like babies when they get colicky, horses will also be screaming and crying. That will be all right if they do not add pacing and stamping, which could not only endanger other people who go near them but also themselves. Horses risk serious injury when they are at this kind of situation. Because of the pain, they do not know what they are doing, short of destroying the whole barn if they can.

What's happening?

Colic is actually very common. In fact, every horse-lover, horse breeder and horse rider will have come across the term one way or the other. References would have been made in various equine books and digests. Colic is considered as an equine emergency because of the way horses react to the problem due to a painful abdomen. They can really get wild.

There are several types of colic in horses. The first one is the spasmodic colic or that which arises from excessive gas. This is the less severe type. The other one is the obstructive colic, which is often caused by obstructions in some parts of their body. This may be in the form of displacements or twists in their muscles.

It can also be caused by impactions in the intestines or in the large colons. Often, this will require treatment, either with oil and a medicine or in other more severe cases, fluid therapy. Another type of colic is caused by overeating while another type is caused by worms.

What can happen?

As mentioned above, colic in horses can get really serious. This is because they are not structured the way humans are. They are not also "wired" the way we are; so there are things that we can do that they cannot. Here are some of them.

Building it up

Since horses cannot cope with the pressure in their stomach. Unlike humans, they cannot vomit. The pressure will then be bottled up inside and build up as time pass. This will cause distention, which will require decompression.

Anatomically impossible

Horses are built with small anatomical parts. There are narrow areas in their bodies , particularly in the digestive systems that can cause impactions and obstructions.

Backward movements

The processes in their digestive systems also have these backward movements, which can exacerbate the condition when an impaction occurs.

Blood thirsty

The road where their blood travels through is so long and narrow that impactions can occur. It also has a lot of twists and turns that it is not surprising that they are susceptible to obstructions. When this happens, the horse can die because blood flow will stop and supply of oxygen to the heart will cease.

Worm-sensitive

Horses are very sensitive to the bacteria that come into their bodies especially those that go into their intestines. The bacteria balance in their bodies is so sensitive that a change in their food or in the supplements that they take in can cause disruptions.