

## **Your Horse's Health and the Internet**

Chris Bell DVM

An internet search for "horse health" will bring up over 800 thousand webpage's. Often horse owners will turn to the internet as an early first line of information about a particular problem with their horse. With this magnitude of information before you it can be difficult to sort through the good and the bad.

The internet is a useful tool which can provide good information, but it can also lead you astray with misleading or wrong information. Whenever in an emergency situation with your horse always contact a veterinarian first. For other problems, the internet can help build background knowledge and be used together with veterinary advice. Never treat a horse based solely on information found on the internet. If in doubt consult your equine veterinarian.

When searching for information regarding your horse's health try to stick to mainstream horse webpage's with articles by veterinarians. The American Association of Equine Practitioner's provides a website called My Horse Matters ([www.myhorsematters.com](http://www.myhorsematters.com)). This website is recommended by equine veterinarians to their clients for use in conjunction with veterinary advice to help understand and treat their horse's problem. On the website you will find information on reproduction, lameness, West Nile Virus, colic, dentistry, pre-purchase exams, geriatric care, gastric ulcers and many other horse health related questions. The website also provides an area for horse owners to ask questions to AAEP veterinarians in a monthly Q & A column. Other well recognized websites for your horse's health include The Horse ([www.thehorse.com](http://www.thehorse.com)) and Equus ([www.equisearch.com](http://www.equisearch.com)). Both are magazines which provide excellent online information to horse owners and are endorsed by the AAEP. Another place to find good background information about your horse's health is through breed association webpage's. These pages often provide information specific to the breed or information on new research regarding a problem specific in your breed of horse. If you are scientifically inclined, you can find the abstracts of scientific papers published in veterinary medical journals by using a service called Pubmed ([www.pubmed.com](http://www.pubmed.com)). To use the service you will need to search using specific and detailed information about your horse's disease otherwise the searches can be frustrating and unfruitful.

The internet is a vast wealth of information and can be quite useful to help understand your horse's health problems. Remember to always consult your veterinarian regarding your horse's health issues before beginning any treatment regimen. Have fun with your horse!

Dr. Chris Bell  
Arizona Equine Medical and Surgical Centre  
1685 S. Gilbert Rd  
Gilbert, AZ  
85296  
480-962-6660