

Equine Veterinary Associates

Client Information about Cellulitis

Cellulitis is the most common cause of painful inflammatory edema in horses. It is often associated with a wound or local reaction to an injection. Cellulitis is often undetected at first by owner because wound or trauma is not overly noticeable. Most cellulitis cases will be in the limbs.

This is a serious infection and needs to be examined by your veterinarian within a few hours.

Etiology:

- Infectious Cellulitis is most commonly caused by *S. aureus* or *Clostridium* following a wound or injection
- Can be caused by staphylococcal infection following blunt trauma that doesn't break skin (getting kicked)

Clinical Signs:

- Pain and swelling
- Often swollen area is hot to the touch
- Horse may or may not exhibit a fever
- Severe lameness with affected limbs

Treatment:

- Antibiotics
- Anti-inflammatories
- Tetanus shot (very important)
- Supportive care

Treatment on a leg: as above, plus

- Sweat wrap
- Cold hosing

Things the owner can do before the veterinarian sees the horse:

- Cold hose affected area
- Stall horse or keep confined in small area
- Check Temperature
- Monitor horse's drinking/eating