



Hydration for Horses

Ensuring fresh, clean water



Why Clean Water Matters

Water is essential for all life, and horses are no exception. Adequate hydration is crucial for numerous bodily functions, including:

- **Digestion:** Water helps horses break down food and absorb nutrients efficiently. Dehydration can lead to impaction colic, a serious and potentially fatal condition.
- **Temperature Regulation:** Horses use sweat to cool down, and sweating requires water. Without enough water, they can overheat, especially during exercise or hot weather.
- **Joint Lubrication:** Water cushions and lubricates joints, reducing the risk of stiffness and pain.
- **Waste Elimination:** The kidneys require water to filter waste products from the blood. Dehydration can strain the kidneys and lead to health problems.
- **Overall Health and Performance:** A well-hydrated horse is a healthier, happier, and more athletic horse. Dehydration can cause fatigue, reduced performance, and increased susceptibility to illness.

Step-by-Step Guide to Providing Clean Water

Step 1: Choose the Right Water Source

- Buckets
- Automatic Drinkers
- Troughs

Select a water source that is appropriate for your horse and your setup. **Buckets** are easy to clean and monitor, but require frequent refilling. **Automatic drinkers** provide a constant supply of water, but need to be checked regularly for proper function. **Troughs** can hold a large amount of water, but are prone to algae growth and contamination.

Step 2: Clean Regularly

- Daily
- Weekly

Clean water containers **daily** to remove debris, algae, and manure. This prevents the build-up of harmful bacteria and keeps the water palatable for your horse.

Step 3: Provide Fresh Water

- Multiple times a day
- Especially during hot weather/after exercise

Empty and refill water containers with fresh, clean water **multiple times a day**, especially during hot weather or after exercise. Horses prefer clean water, and they are more likely to drink enough if the water is clean and cool. Monitor water intake, and adjust the amount of water provided based on your horse's needs.

Step 4: Check Water Quality

- Inspect Regularly
- Test if Necessary

Regularly inspect the water source for any signs of contamination, such as E.coli, bacteria, algae and even virus's. If you suspect the water is contaminated, have it tested by Equine bio genie and our associated laboratory.

Recognising Dehydration

It is important to be able to recognise the signs of dehydration in your horse. Here are some things to look for:

- **Decreased skin elasticity:** Gently pinch a fold of skin on your horse's neck. If the skin takes more than a few seconds to return to normal, your horse may be dehydrated.
- **Dry or sticky gums:** A horse's gums should be moist. Dry or sticky gums are a sign of dehydration.
- **Sunken eyes:** Dehydrated horses may have sunken eyes.
- **Lethargy or weakness:** A dehydrated horse may be lethargic, weak, or unwilling to move.
- **Decreased urine output:** A dehydrated horse will produce less urine than normal.
- **Concentrated urine:** The urine may be darker in colour.

If you suspect your horse is dehydrated, consult with your veterinarian immediately.

Conclusion

Providing clean, fresh water is one of the most important things you can do for your horse's health and well-being. By following these simple steps, you can help ensure that your horse stays hydrated and healthy for years to come. Remember to monitor your horse's water intake, especially during hot weather or after exercise, and consult with your veterinarian if you have any concerns about dehydration.

Top Tip

Save time and sweat by using Equine Bio Genie water treatment, used once every 2-3 weeks ensures your horses water stays clean and fresh while avoiding the need for regular cleaning. EBG water treatment kills unwanted bacteria and virus's that can live in your horses water.