The Horse Health Check

**Eyes**
- Bright, clear
- Glassy
- Fixed stare, sunken eye

**Capillary Refill**
- 0-1 seconds
- 2-3 seconds
- 4+ seconds

**Skin Pinch**
- 0-1.5 seconds
- 2-3 seconds
- 4+ seconds

**Mucous Membranes**
- Pink, moist
- Pale, tacky
- Dry, purple, blue

**Jugular Refill**
- 1-2 seconds
- 2-3 seconds
- 4+ seconds

**Spiratory Rate**
- Relaxed/regular
- Panting, inversion
- Laboured, abnormal

**Mucous Membranes**
- Pink, moist
- Pale, tacky
- Dry, purple, blue

**Wounds/Saddle/Girth**
- No visible marks
- Heat/swelling/tenderness
- Pain/raw/bleeding

**Muscles/Back**
- Relaxed
- Tight or tender
- Very tight or tender

**Rectal Temperature**
- <38.6 °C pre-ride
- <39.6 °C during ride
- 39.5-40.4 °C during ride
- >40.5 °C

**Anal Tone**
- Tight
- Slightly loose
- Anus/penis relaxed

**Joints/Legs**
- No heat or swelling
- Heat/swelling
- Pain/raw bleeding

**Rectal Tone**
- Tight
- Slightly loose
- Anus/penis relaxed

**Impulsion**
- Free, willing, eager
- Stumble/short stride
- Stiffness/limping

**Heart Rate**
- (after strenuous exercise)
- <68 in 10 minutes
- 68 in 10-30 minutes
- >68 in 30 minutes

**Gait**
- No abnormal gait
- Slight gait change
- Consistent gait change or non-weight bearing

**Gut Sounds**
- Normal sounds
- Reduced/increased
- Absent or abnormal sounds

**Skin Pinch**
- 0-1.5 seconds
- 2-3 seconds
- 4+ seconds

**Jugular Refill**
- 1-2 seconds
- 2-3 seconds
- 4+ seconds

**Rectal Temperature**
- <38.6 °C pre-ride
- <39.6 °C during ride
- 39.5-40.4 °C during ride
- >40.5 °C

**Anal Tone**
- Tight
- Slightly loose
- Anus/penis relaxed

**Joints/Legs**
- No heat or swelling
- Heat/swelling
- Pain/raw bleeding

**Impulsion**
- Free, willing, eager
- Stumble/short stride
- Stiffness/limping

Developed by Art King, DVM and Gayle Ecker, not to be copied without written permission

For more information please visit, www.equineguelph.ca & www.equinesciencecertificate.com
The Horse Health Check

Directions: As you are performing the Horse Health Check, record your observations on the following table by placing them in the appropriate category (green, yellow, red). Then record your results and any other important comments into your permanent stable records on each horse.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parameter</th>
<th>Green</th>
<th>Yellow</th>
<th>Red</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Eyes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capillary Refill</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mucous Membranes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jugular Refill</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skin Pinch</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heart Rate</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respiratory Rate</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gut Sounds</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wounds/Saddle/Girth</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muscles/Back</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rectal Temperature</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anal Tone</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joints/Legs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gait</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attitude</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impulsion</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These parameters can be recorded on a resting horse to determine basic health and during or after exercise/competition. The heart rate recovery refers to the heart rate after exercise. If any of the parameters are in the yellow zone, you should stop exercising your horse and check out the horse carefully and medical assistance may be necessary. If any parameter is in the red zone, you should consult with your veterinarian as soon as possible, as medical treatment may be necessary.