



Covered Bridge Equine, P.C.
1071 Jamestown Blvd. Suite #D1
Watkinsville, Georgia 30677

Pregnant Mare Checklist

Early Pregnancy:

- Your mare should be confirmed pregnant by a veterinarian with an ultrasonographic exam **14 days after ovulation**. At this time, the uterus can be examined thoroughly to evaluate uterine tone, tone of the cervix and also to look for twins. Other abnormalities may also be noted at this time.
- The embryo's heartbeat is visible by ultrasonographic exam at **23-25 days** of pregnancy. Your mare should be rechecked around **days 28-45 of pregnancy** to be sure the pregnancy has been maintained and the heartbeat is still visible. **Early embryonic death most commonly occurs in the first 45 days of pregnancy.**
- Pregnant mares should be vaccinated against equine rhinopneumonitis (EHV-1) at **5, 7, and 9 months** of gestation to decrease the likelihood of abortion due to herpes virus.

Late Pregnancy:

- Your mare should also be **vaccinated 30 days prior to her foaling date** to ensure appropriate levels of antibodies are present in her colostrum. These antibodies will help protect the newborn foal until the foal's immune system is fully developed (around 2-3 months of age). Pre-foaling vaccine protocols can vary, but it is typically recommended to vaccinate against EEE, WEE, Tetanus, Influenza, Rabies, and West Nile. It is also recommended to **deworm your mare 30 days before her foaling date** with ivermectin paste.
- If your mare has had a Caslick's (sutured vulvar lips) in place during pregnancy, the procedure needs to be reversed within 7-14 days of her expected foaling date to prevent soft tissue trauma during foaling.
- Your mare **MUST** be removed from **fescue pasture** and hay in her **last trimester of pregnancy**. Endophytes on the fescue grass can prevent udder development, prolong pregnancy and cause a condition known as "Red Bagging" in which the placenta does not separate appropriately and is a serious emergency for your foal! If all your pastures have fescue



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grass, it is recommended to put the mare in either a round pen or other small paddock area where the fescue has been killed with Roundup. The mare can be fed hay and grain only during the last 3 months of pregnancy.

Foaling

- Many mares will be anxious and restless prior to foaling. Commercial kits are available to test your mare's milk calcium or pH prior to foaling to give an idea of when she is about 24 hours away from having her foal. Other signs to look for are udder development, a change in her mammary secretions (become thicker and sticky), elongation of the vulva and loss of tail tone. Some maiden mares may not show all of these signs before their first foal.
- Once your mare begins to act restless or her water breaks, her mammary glands and vulva should be cleaned using warm, soapy water. It is also good to loosely wrap her tail with clean gauze or vet-wrap to keep it clean during foaling. This greatly decreases the amount of bacteria the foal ingests when passing through the birth canal and attempting to suckle. Be careful, as some mares can be very sensitive and may not tolerate cleaning.
- Foaling is initiated when the mare's water breaks. From this point forward, it should not take more than one hour for the foal to be born. The foal's front feet should present first, followed by its nose between its front legs. If the foal is presented abnormally, please call CBE immediately. Also, if the mare does not seem to be progressing in the foaling process within 20 minutes of her water breaking, please call CBE for advice and assistance.
- The mare should pass her placenta within three hours of foaling. If it is not passed by this time, it is considered retained and veterinary treatment will be necessary. If part of the placenta is protruding from the mare's vagina, **DO NOT** attempt to pull the placenta out. This could tear the placenta and contribute to major problems such as a uterine infection and subsequent laminitis. When the mare does pass her placenta, keep the placenta in a garbage bag out of the sun and away from other animals until your veterinarian can perform a thorough inspection.
- Make sure that your mare is lactating at the time of foaling and that she allows the foal to nurse. Maiden mares can be very sensitive around their



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mammary glands and may need some assistance in accepting the foal. (The foal should stand and nurse within 2 hours of foaling). If problems are noted with foal acceptance or suckling, veterinary intervention may be necessary.

**** Remember the 1, 2, 3, rule about foaling****

1 hour maximum for the foaling process to be completed after the mare's water breaks,

2 hours until the foal stands AND successfully nurses,

3 hours for complete passage of the placenta

- Your mare may have a dose of oral Banamine once the foaling process is complete and she has passed her placenta. Ask your veterinarian to prescribe her appropriate dose for you.
- The mare should be dewormed with an **ivermectin paste dewormer** (there are several different brands available) **within 24 hours of foaling**. This will decrease the incidence of *Strongyloides westerii* in her milk and thus in the foal.
- A thorough physical exam by a veterinarian should be done on the mare and foal within the **first 12-24 hours post foaling** to rule out failure of passive transfer to the foal, problems such as uterine infection, rectal tears, retained placenta, vaginal trauma, hydration status and body condition in the mare. During this visit, the foal will also have a complete physical exam carried out and a blood sample will be drawn to be sure that adequate immunoglobulin levels are present from the mare's colostrum.
- Monitor your new foal and mare closely! Foals should **nurse about once an hour and pass feces regularly**. Many foals require an enema after birth. A fleet enema or soapy water enema is often administered prophylactically. Your veterinarian can discuss safe enema administration and foal restraint and handling with you during your pre-natal and well foal exams.