

How to prepare your horse for gastroscopic examination of the stomach

Your vet will need to allow your horse's stomach to empty of food overnight in-order for the stomach to be examined thoroughly.

Preparation

1. Remove any remaining feed and hay by 10 pm at the latest if your horse is having gastroscopy performed the following morning.
2. Horses should ideally be bedded on shavings or a material that they will not eat. Some horses will eat bedding or faeces when they do not have access to feed so it may be preferable to place the horse on rubber matting or to use a muzzle.
3. Do not offer your horse hay or morning feed the day of the procedure or during transport to the vet.

Gastroscopic examination

1. Gastroscopic examination of the stomach will generally take around 15- 20 minutes.
2. Your horse will be given in intravenous sedative prior to gastroscopy.
3. A 3-meter long endoscopic video camera (or gastroscope) will be passed into the stomach via one of the nostrils.
4. The procedure is safe, some horses may have a short self-resolving nose bleed from the delicate lining of the nostril.
5. If treatment for gastric disease is necessary, your vet will discuss the most appropriate treatment based on the lesions identified and will also discuss any management or feeding changes that may be necessary.

Following the examination

1. Your horse should not be travelled, turned-out or fed until it has woken from the sedation. Your vet will advise you how long this will take.