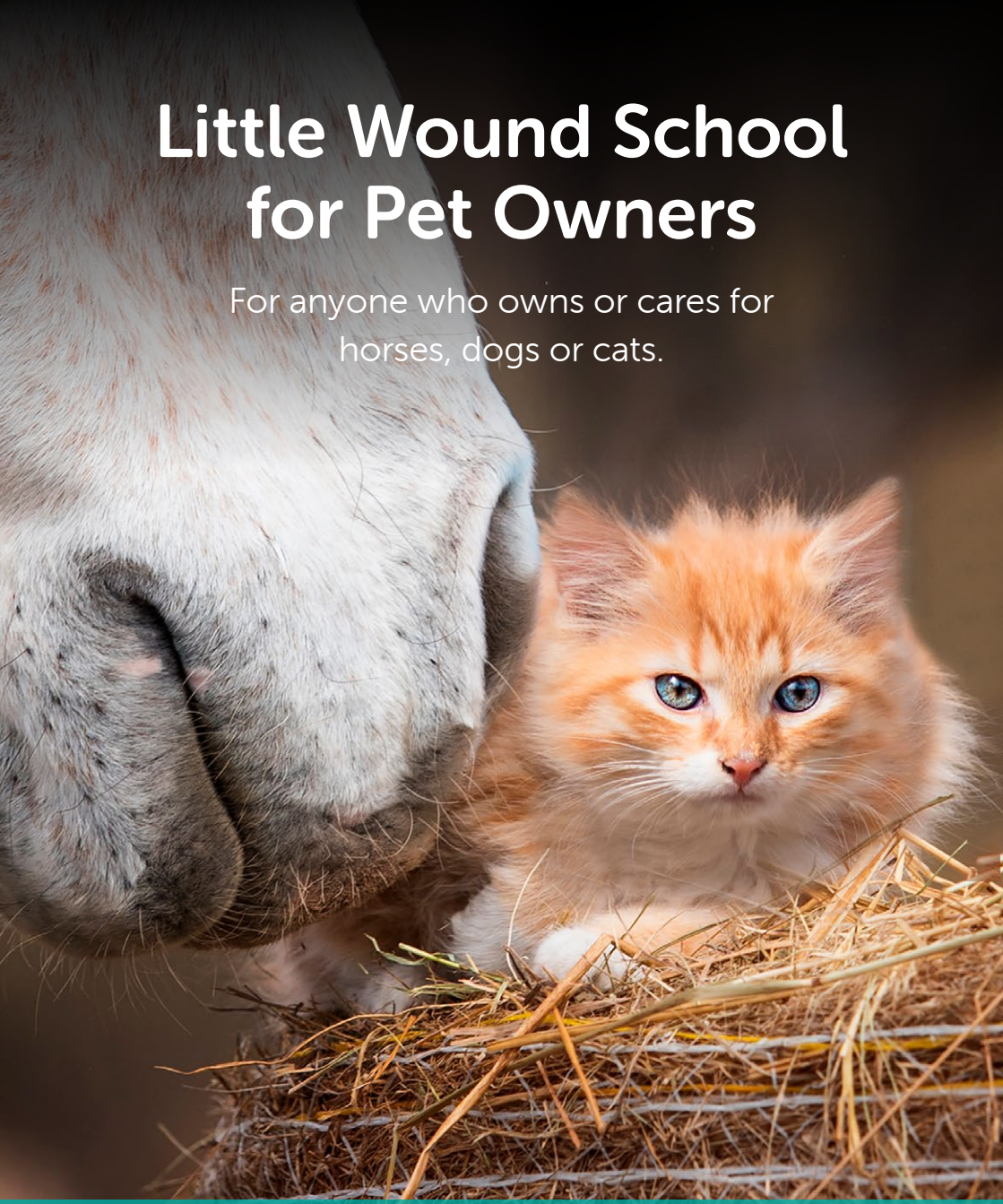
Little Wound School for Pet Owners

For anyone who owns or cares for horses, dogs or cats.



The contents of this pamphlet have been fact-checked by Anna Pilåker, licensed veterinarian

Wounds in horses

Horses are large, sensitive creatures that can come in for many different types of wounds. This means that if you own or look after a horse, sooner or later you will have to treat a wound. This pamphlet is designed to give you tips and advice on how to best treat different wounds. Contact a vet if you ever feel unsure.

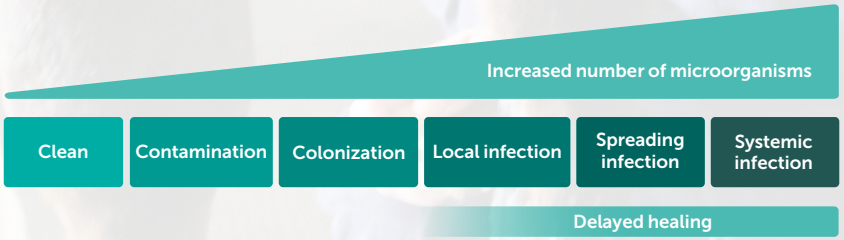
Treating wounds: general points

Any treatment of wounds should, as far as is possible, aim to support the wound's natural healing process without interfering with it. An important aspect of effective wound healing is to optimize the wound environment by regulating both the moisture balance and the amount of microorganisms in the wound. Lukewarm water is always the best choice when cleaning an acute wound.

Prevent infection

Microorganisms are all around us. When the skin is damaged, they have the chance to get into the underlying tissue. Microorganisms in and of themselves are usually not harmful, and they can actually stimulate the healing process. However, if certain species of bacteria and fungi are allowed to multiply unchecked, they can give off toxic substances that cause infection. By controlling the amount of microorganisms at play, we can prevent the wound from getting infected. This increases the chances of the wound healing well and reduces the need for antibiotics.

Always wear disposable gloves when cleaning a wound, and put used dressings into a plastic bag before throwing them in the trash. Take the horse's temperature every day and check the wound area to detect any possible infections. Contact a vet if the horse has a fever – i.e. a temperature above 101.3°F.



How to clean a wound

Start by washing your hands with soap and water. Then rinse the wound with running tap water at body temperature and wash with a mild liquid soap. Rinse well. For deeper cuts it may be a good idea to use saline solution.

Make your own saline solution

Saline solution (0.9%) is available to buy from your local pharmacy, and you should always have some to hand in your stable to use on acute wounds. As you continue to care for the wound, however, it is easy to make your own solution. For this you will need a clean saucepan with a lid, and a clean PET bottle. The recipe for a 0.9% saline solution is 2 tsp (teaspoons) of table salt for every quart of water. Bring the salt and water to the boil in the covered saucepan. Remove from the heat and leave to cool. Pour into the PET bottle. A homemade saline solution should be used within 24 hours.

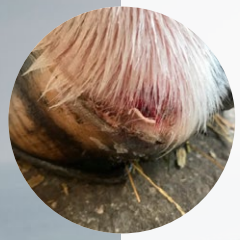
Consider your own safety

When in pain, a horse may react unpredictably. So consider your own safety when cleaning wounds and applying dressings. Where possible, ask for someone else in the stable to help you hold your horse. Feel free to use a nose twitch, which indirectly affects the horse's nervous system and makes it less likely to react to pain impulses. If a vet needs to suture the wound, he or she may need to give the horse both local anesthetic and a tranquilizer.

Do not use chemicals on wounds

Iodine solution may have its place in the stable as a disinfectant, but it should not be used on wounds. Iodine is highly irritating to the skin and may hurt the horse and compromise the healing process. Dirty wounds can be cleaned with chlorhexidine soap, but in general you should steer clear of old-fashioned home remedies and alternative medicines that can be harmful. If in doubt, always ask your vet.

Common wounds in horses



Overreach injuries

Overreach injuries typically occur when a horse accidentally steps on the lower part of its own front hoof. This will usually leave an upward-facing flap of skin in which dirt can accumulate. The wound needs to be treated as soon as possible so that the skin can re-attach. Rinse with water or saline solution. Press down the skin flap, apply a bacteria-binding compress and fix in place with a bandage around the heel bulb and coronet band. If the injury is higher up on the leg, the wound may need suturing by a vet.

Cuts

Cuts that penetrate the skin and are more than an inch long should always be sutured by a vet. This is the best way to ensure quick and lasting healing. In particular, a vet should be called if the wound is close to any tendons or joints. Clean the wound with saline solution. Feel free to use a disposable irrigation syringe and spray saline solution into the wound to see if there is a pocket beneath the skin (the skin will raise). Pockets where the opening faces upwards are more serious as dirt can gather inside. A vet may sometimes insert a 'drain' into the pocket – a plastic or rubber tube that conducts fluids out of the wound – for the first few days. The tube is removed after 3-4 days. If the wound is sutured (stitched), the sutures are removed after about 10 days.

Scrapes

If a horse falls over, it can get some decent scrapes. Rinse with water to remove any gravel or dirt. Make sure no gravel is stuck inside the wound. Wash with chlorhexidine soap and then rinse with saline solution. Scrapes can really sting. Feel feel to apply wound gel or a bacteria-binding gel compress that moisturizes while reducing the risk of infection.

Puncture wounds

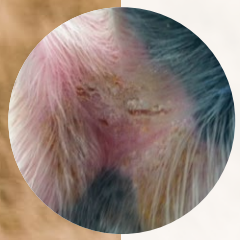
Puncture wounds may look innocent, but they almost always need to be checked by a vet to ensure that there is no damage to deeper structures. There may also be bacteria or foreign bodies trapped inside the wound that can cause severe infection. In the case of puncture wounds it is particularly important to review the horse's tetanus vaccinations. Tetanus is a life-threatening disease caused by the bacterium Clostridium tetani. The bacterium's spores can be found in soil and manure, where they can survive for a long time. The vet may give the horse another tetanus vaccine just to be on the safe side.

Hoof abscesses

If your horse suddenly becomes lame from one day to the next, you should first check if this is due to a hoof abscess. Contact a farrier who can determine if this is the case and open up the hoof to drain the pus. It is important to keep the wound clean. Wash with chlorhexidine soap and rinse before applying a hoof bandage.

Kick injuries

Kick injuries require extra vigilance, as they mean that the tissue has been subjected to severe trauma. It is not uncommon for the skin to loosen and for pockets to form beneath the skin. Kicks can also cause chips or fractures to the bone. For this reason the injury should be examined by a vet. While waiting for the vet, feel free to apply a bacteria-binding gel compress that keeps the wound moist while also reducing bacterial growth.



Mud fever

Mud fever is caused by irritation, dirt, moisture and occasionally fungi, leading to increased bacterial growth. A skin inflammation with crusts (or scabs) forms on the pastern or lower part of the leg. Shave the fur around the area and wash with warm water (around 40°C). Carefully try to remove the scabs, as the bacteria accumulate beneath these. You can also try to soften the scabs with salicylic acid Vaseline. Always wear gloves. Then wash with chlorhexidine soap and leave to work for 10 minutes. Rinse with water and dry the area thoroughly. Apply inotyol ointment to soften the skin and protect from the sun. Repeat daily. If the condition doesn't improve, contact your vet.

Hard-to-heal wounds

If a wound does not heal properly, this could be due to any number of reasons. It may be proud flesh, a cauliflower-like outgrowth from the wound. Proud flesh must be kept level with the surrounding skin if the wound is to heal. It may be that too much movement is causing the wound to rise. Sarcoids can also form in the wound. Or it could be a bacterial wound infection. Contact a vet for assistance. While waiting for the vet, you can always apply a bacteria-binding dressing to reduce bacterial growth in the wound.

Good to have in your stable

- Disposable gloves
- Saline solution
- Chlorhexidine soap
- Irrigation syringe
- Bacteria-binding compresses/dressings
- Cotton wool roll
- Gauze (non-elastic)
- Elastic adhesive dressing
- Nose twitch
- Scissors and tweezers
- Clinical thermometer
- Flashlight
- Emollient ointment

Treating wounds in horses

Bandaging for overreach injuries

1. Rinse with water or saline solution.
2. Press the skin flap back in place and apply a sterile compress.
3. Wrap heel bulb and coronet band with non-elastic gauze. Flip over at each round so that there is good pressure on the wound.
4. Cover with an adhesive elastic dressing.

You will need:

- Disposable gloves
- Saline solution
- Chlorhexidine soap
- Irrigation syringe
- Bacteria-binding compresses (Sorbact®)
- Non-elastic gauze
- Adhesive elastic wrap

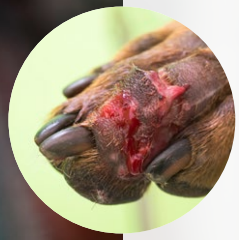
Bandaging legs

1. Apply a sterile compress or dressing that deals with bacteria as well as any fluids in the wound.
2. Wrap with padding bandages.
3. Apply a layer of cotton around the leg and wrap with non-elastic gauze so that the pressure is even.
4. Cover everything with an adhesive elastic dressing. Don't wrap too tight.

You will need:

- Disposable gloves
- Saline solution
- Chlorhexidine soap
- Irrigation syringe
- Bacteria-binding dressing (Sorbact®)
- Padding bandages to wrap
- Cotton
- Non-elastic gauze
- Adhesive elastic wrap

Treating wounds in dogs and cats



Paw sores

Sores on paws are common in dogs, so make a habit of checking your dog's paws after it has been outside. If a dog has been running in fields or grassy roadsides, it can get plant ears between its toes. These ears can get inside the 'webbing' between the toes and give rise to abscesses. These should be treated by a vet.

Claw injuries

Many dog owners feel unsure about cutting their dog's claws, and as a result the claws get long and catch easily. If the claw shell breaks, the claw usually cannot be saved and a vet will have to remove part of or the entire claw. It will take a long time for a new claw to grow out.

Prevent sore paws

- Keep claws cut short.
- Trim the fur between the pads.
- Moisturize dry and cracked pads.
- Check paws after you have been outside.

Tooth damage

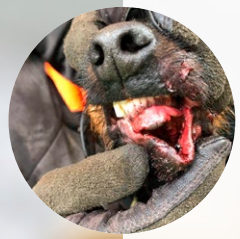
If your dog has chipped part of a canine tooth, the situation is urgent. Take the dog straight to the vet to save the tooth where possible.

Dog bites

If your dog has been bitten by another dog, it will usually need to be taken to a vet, who can examine and dress the wound and, where necessary, prescribe antibiotics.

Cat bites

If your cat has been in a fight with another cat, you need to check if it has sustained any wounds or if a claw has been damaged. Bite wounds are difficult to detect and there is a high risk of them developing into abscesses. If any swelling appears and the cat appears to be in pain it should be taken to the vet. The wound cavity needs to be flushed out properly and a drain is often inserted for a few days so that pus and fluids can drain from the wound. Wash often with saline solution, massage gently to drain any pus and keep the wound open until it has healed from the inside.



Hunting injuries

Hunting dogs are at risk of injury, so a protective vest is to be recommended, especially if your dog is hunting at distance. Always have first aid equipment at hand, including saline solution, bacteria-binding dressings and adhesive wraps. In areas where there are wild boars, you might also carry adhesive plastic wrap (cling film): if the dog has been attacked, rinse the wound thoroughly with saline solution and wrap plastic wrap around it several times before taking the dog to a veterinary clinic.

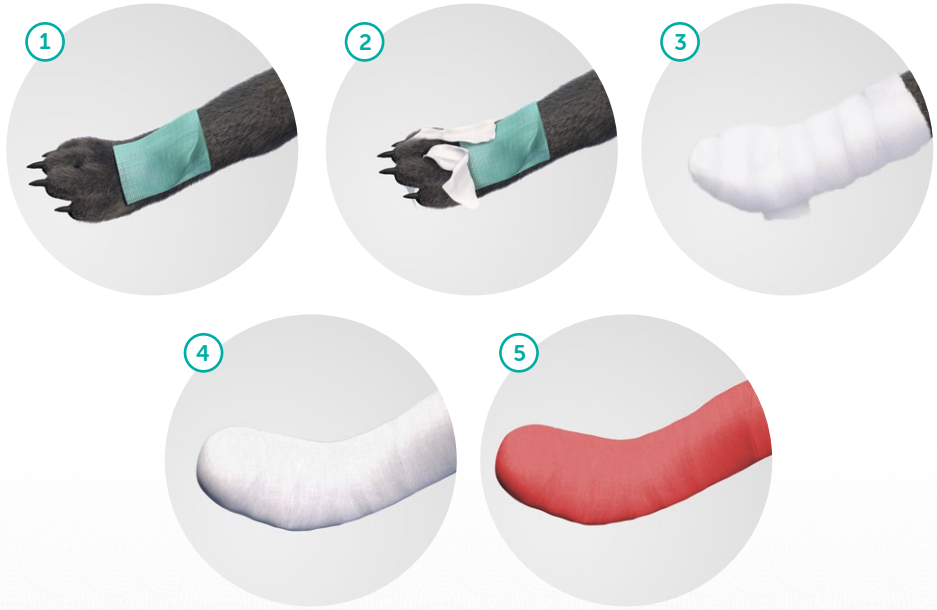
Itch-related wounds

Some cats may experience allergic reactions to a change in feed or cat litter. Early signs of a reaction are dots or small sores in front of the ears, where the fur is sparser. The itchiness may cause the cat to scratch, leaving wounds that are easily infected. Wash thoroughly and put on a cone. If the condition doesn't improve, contact a vet.

Hot spots

Hot spots, or acute moist dermatitis, are common in summer and especially in long-haired dogs. They can be caused by a small wound or scratch to the skin, which in a damp environment can lead to bacterial growth. Shave the fur in the affected area – often you can't see how big it really is. Wash with chlorhexidine soap and apply an anti-itch ointment. Prevent the dog from itching or licking the area with a cone. Hot spots can spread quickly. If detected in time, they can be treated through washing. Otherwise you should take the dog to the vet for treatment.

Treating wounds in dogs and cats



Bandaging a paw

1. Wash the wound and apply a bacteria-binding compress.
2. Place strands of cotton wool between the toes to prevent skin irritation.
3. Wrap cotton around the entire paw and part of the leg.
4. Wrap gauze around the paw and part of the leg. Fix in place with medical tape.
5. Wrap on a layer of self-adhesive dressing – the entire bandage should be covered.

Change the bandage daily or as instructed by your vet.

Top with a paw guard or plastic bag in wet weather. Remove the guard as soon as you come indoors.

You will need:

- Disposable gloves
- Saline solution
- Chlorhexidine soap
- Irrigation syringe
- Bacteria-binding dressing (Sorbact®)
- Cotton
- Gauze bandage
- Adhesive elastic wrap
- Paw protection for walks where needed

Sorbact® prevents wound infection

Sorbact® bacteria-binding dressings prevent and treat infections by reducing the amount of microorganisms in the wound. Bacteria from the wound bed bind to the surface of the dressing and are removed when the dressing is changed. Sorbact® facilitates the wound's healing process by reducing the amount of bacteria without inserting any active substances into the wound.

Binds common microorganisms (bacteria and fungi) found in wounds, as well as multidrug-resistant bacteria

Common microorganisms found in wounds such as Staphylococcus aureus, the Streptococcus species, Escherichia coli, Pseudomonas aeruginosa and Candida albicans all bind to the Sorbact® dressing's unique surface. Sorbact® also binds multidrug-resistant bacteria such as MRSA (methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus).

Facilitates healing

Elevated levels of bacteria lead to an increased risk of infection and delay the wound from healing. Sorbact® safely reduces the amount of bacteria, improving the wound's ability to heal.

No known risk of resistance

Microorganisms bind to Sorbact® and are removed when the dressing is replaced. No antimicrobial resistance mechanisms are described with Sorbact®.

No active substances emitted into the wound

- Improves wound's ability to heal
- Can be used to prevent infections with no time limit
- No withdrawal time for competing

The Sorbact® range

Pharmacy range

- Sorbact® Compress
  For deep and superficial exuding wounds
  4 x 6 cm, 7 x 9 cm
- Sorbact® Absorption
  For exuding superficial wounds
  7 x 9 cm
- Sorbact® Secure
  For slightly exuding superficial wounds
  With water-resistant protective film
  5 x 7.2 cm, 8 x 10 cm

Veterinary wholesaler range

- Sorbact® Compress
  4 x 6 cm, 7 x 9 cm
- Sorbact® Gel Dressing
  7.5 x 7.5 cm, 7.5 x 15 cm
- Sorbact® Absorption Dressing
  7 x 9 cm, 10 x 10 cm, 10 x 20 cm
- Sorbact® Foam Dressing
  10 x 10 cm, 15 x 15 cm, 10 x 20 cm
- Sorbact® Foam Gentle Border
  7.5 x 7.5 cm, 10 x 10 cm, 15 x 15 cm
- Sorbact® Superabsorbent
  10 x 10 cm, 10 x 20 cm, 20 x 20 cm, 20 x 30 cm
- Sorbact® Surgical Dressing
  5 x 7.2 cm, 8 x 10 cm, 8 x 15 cm, 10 x 20 cm, 10 x 25 cm, 10 x 30 cm, 10 x 35 cm
- Sorbact® Ribbon Gauze
  1 x 50 cm, 2 x 50 cm, 5 x 200 cm, 10 x 200 cm

To find Sorbact® wholesalers and learn more about treating wounds, please visit sorbact.se

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