



Licking Valley Veterinary Services  
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## Post-Castration Care Equine

\_\_\_\_\_ has undergone a castration or gelding (orchidectomy); the removal of a portion of the male reproductive tract (testicles). He has undergone general anesthesia and may still be groggy and a bit uncoordinated.

**Keep your horse alone in a small area for 24 hours after surgery.** A standard stall bedded with straw or a small grassy enclosure is ideal. If your horse is very nervous alone, it is sometimes better to put another horse next to him to help keep him calm. He should be kept in a clean, dry area to reduce the incidence of infection at the surgery site.

**Hay and grain should not be offered until the next morning.** If he does not want to eat, do not be alarmed. Interest in food and water usually returns within 24 hours. Normal diet can be resumed the day after surgery.

**No trailering for at least 24 hours after surgery.**

**After the initial 24 hour period, you need to make your horse trot for at least 20 minutes twice daily for 7 days.** This helps keep the surgery site open and keeps it draining. The most common complication to this surgery is inadequate exercise causing swelling and infection at the surgery site. The general rule is swelling to the size of an orange is acceptable; if to the size of a grapefruit increase the exercise. Vigorous exercise is often necessary to control the swelling in horses older than 3 years old. The maximum swelling is usually reached by day 5 - 7 and can continue for up to three weeks. Excessive swelling or purulent discharge can indicate a complication such as an infection or hernia so please contact us at 859-472-4141 if in doubt about this especially if the scrotum becomes more swollen on one side than the other.

**Pain control is recommended.** This will help with a quicker and more comfortable healing process. Phenylbutazone (Bute) 1 gram orally twice a day for 5 days is sufficient for most horses. Please ask for dosing of Phenylbutazone for horses different from a typical 1,000 # horse.

**It usually requires 2-4 weeks for testosterone levels to drop and for 2-4 weeks there is the potential that one round of semen may be remaining in the body. He should not be turned out with mares for at least 4 weeks after surgery.**

Monitor closely for excessive swelling (a small amount of swelling at the tip of the sheath is expected) or a foul-smelling, pus discharge from the surgery site. There may be a problem if your horse will not eat, drink, or move around on his own. *If you notice any of these problems call our office at 859-472-4141.*