



WHY DO HORSES ROLL?

The good, the bad, and the ugly!

WHY ARE YOU ROLLING?



You see it all the time around the Equicenter, horses getting down on the ground and rolling about...but why? Let's explore the behavior together!

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a8EFWU-wqIM&feature=emb_title

NORMAL, HEALTHY BEHAVIOR

- After you ride maybe you see your horse friend having a roll in the pasture, he's probably relieving some stress and getting off any sweat with that nice relaxing wiggle.
- Maybe he has an itch! It's a good thing we have these monkey thumbs, but our horse friends don't and need to use the ground to get that sweet relief.
- That bath made him feel funny! I know it seems strange to us but horse's skin is super sensitive, and even a nice clean bath can just feel weird; sometimes they need some good ole' dirt to set things right.

IT'S CONTAGIOUS!!!!

- When one horse sees another horse relaxing with a good “ground massage” they frequently copy the behavior.
- Often they use the same spot, word around the barn is Mavrick makes the best rollin hole...



https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n0eA2CDfpAk&feature=emb_title

WHEN IS IT A PROBLEM?



Most of the time rolling is a good, healthy, natural behavior for horses, but can this behavior mean something more?

UH - OH

Sometimes its a problem when your horse tries to roll, like if you are riding him! Our horse is trying to communicate something to us, probably that he is uncomfortable, but what can we check for?

- The tack could be misplaced or pinching, can you imagine trying to run a mile with a thorn in your sock?
- Our horse could be hurting, he could have a pulled muscle or joint pain. Talk to a professional like an equine chiropractor or a vet!

COLIC

Unfortunately sometimes when a horse rolls it can mean that he is sick. Horses are not able to throw-up so sometimes to try to make their stomachs feel better they roll which can knot up their intestines and make everything worse...

Watch for tell-tale behaviors and symptoms of colic:

- Biting or kicking at his stomach
- Pawing or acting distressed or uncomfortable
- Lack of “gut sounds” (tummy gurgles, passing gas)
- High heart rate and respiratory rate

If you suspect colic, talk to a professional or vet right away.



BUT MOST OF THE TIME, ROLLING JUST FEELS GOOD!

