

Equine metabolic syndrome (EMS)



What is equine metabolic syndrome (EMS)?

- Disorder associated with an inability to regulate blood insulin levels.
- Affected horses show increased regional fat deposition and a reduced ability to lose weight.
- Often affects “thrifty” horses such as ponies, Arabians, and mustangs.
- Primarily treated through diet and exercise management.
- Horses with EMS are at a high risk for laminitis.

What you can do to keep your horse healthy:

- Maintain normal weight, particularly in high-risk breeds.
- Feed appropriately to maintain an ideal body condition score (BCS).
- Exercise particular care when turning horses out on pasture during times of high-soluble carbohydrate content (spring and autumn).

Signs

Insulin dysregulation
Obesity
Increased BCS
Fat deposits
Laminitis

Transmission

Possible genetic
predisposition

Treatment

Diet and exercise
management

**If your horse needs medical care, contact the Large Animal Clinic at (530) 752-1393.*



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