

# Kissing Spines



## What are kissing spines?

- Occur when vertebrae in the spine are too close together, rather than being spaced apart as in a healthy spine, resulting in touching or overlapping of two or more of the bony projections at the top of each vertebrae
- May cause consistent, low-grade pain, but many horses do not exhibit any clinical signs
- Can be a predisposing factor for back pain

### What you can do to keep your horse healthy:

- The exact cause of kissing spines is unknown but is thought to be related to conformation and development.
- It is important to treat potential underlying issues, such as other causes of lameness or improper saddle fit, as these may prevent horses from using their backs properly.

#### Signs

Highly variable  
Lameness  
Poor performance  
Girthiness  
Bucking  
Kicking out  
Sore back

#### Causes

- Unknown
- Thought to be related to conformation and development

#### Treatment

- Physical therapy
- Shockwave
- Corticosteroid injections
- Assess saddle fit
- Chiropractic
- Acupuncture
- Surgery

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