

PREVENTION AND TREATMENT OF OVERHEATING IN HORSES

The following advice is the current best-practice for preventing and treating overheating in horses, with credit to the British Horse Racing Authority (BHA) and the Racecourse Association.

Overheating or Heat Stress is a serious condition that has a huge impact on the horse's welfare. It is possible to reduce the likelihood of overheating by considering the following:

- **Horses should have constant access to water.**
- **When hot or humid consider cooling on arrival at an event, again before riding and immediately after riding.**
- **Cooling is best achieved by applying large amounts of cold water over the large muscles of the shoulders and hindquarters. Repeat this process until the water on the horse is still cool to the touch after about 30 seconds in-contact.**
- **Horses should be kept walking as it helps create a slight breeze which aids evaporation.**
- **Saddles and numnahs contribute to overheating after riding and should be removed as soon as possible. Do not apply sheets or rugs**
- **Signs of Heat Stress include anxiety, agitation, wobbling, staggering and trying to go down. If you notice any of these signs KEEP THE HORSE MOVING AND REQUEST VETERINARY ASSISTANCE IMMEDIATELY.**