

What happens when our horse undergoes general anaesthesia?

Several routine elective and emergency procedures in the horse require general anaesthesia. The decision to anaesthetise your horse is not made lightly and we will always discuss this with you. While everything is done to ensure patient safety, every general anaesthetic carries a certain risk and this risk is higher in horses than in cats, dogs and people.

What happens to our horse prior to undergoing a general anaesthetic?

- Our veterinarians will perform a complete examination and simple blood test to make sure your horse is in good general health. Horses being admitted as an emergency might require stabilisation before anaesthesia.
- Your horse will be starved for 6-10 hours before an elective procedure to decrease the risk of colic.
- An intravenous catheter will be placed to administer medications.
- The shoes will be removed as they might cause damage.
- Your horse will receive painkillers or antibiotics, depending on the surgery.

Risks of general anaesthesia

Our trained staff do everything possible to minimise any risk but risk cannot be avoided completely. On very rare occasions, a horse might die suddenly during induction, the operation or the recovery.

- Tissue damage (e.g. damage to the skin or eye)