



## MEASURING HEART OR PULSE RATE

### Heart Rate

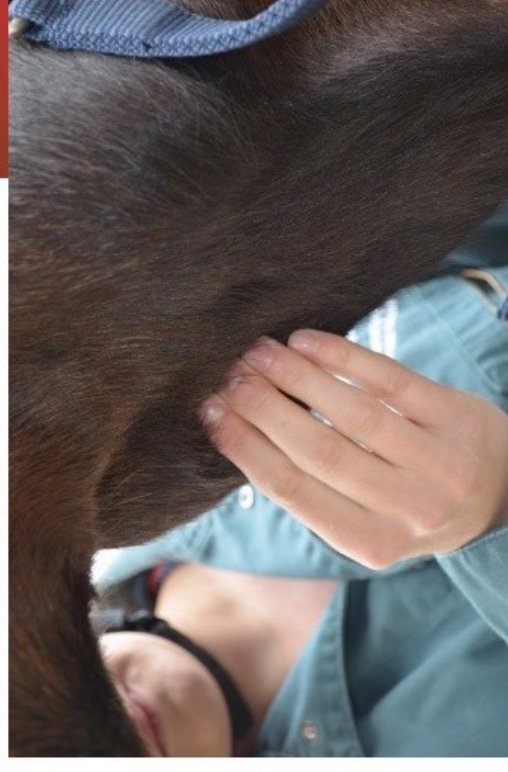
Using a stethoscope, on the left hand side of the horse apply gentle pressure at the location shown in the picture (against the chest just behind the elbow). In horses with a broad chest or those carrying extra weight, it may be harder to hear the heartbeat. Moving the horse's leg forward may make access easier, improving the clarity of the heartbeat. Each heartbeat has two parts as in a human. It takes practice to learn where to place the stethoscope to hear the heartbeat best.

### Pulse Rate

If you do not have access to a stethoscope the horse's pulse can be taken at the facial artery. The facial artery runs over the jaw bone at the bottom of the muscular part of the horse's 'cheek', in between where a noseband and throat lash would sit. The location is also shown on the image provided. The facial artery is approximately 1cm in diameter and feels tube-like, but can be pressed easily. Stabilise the artery with your fingers just on the inside of the jawbone, thumb outside is best (as you will feel your own pulse in your thumb), apply gentle pressure until a pulsing sensation is felt underneath the fingers.

Count either the number of heartbeats or pulse rate for 15 seconds and then multiply the amount by four to calculate the heart rate in beats per minute.

Taking the horse's heart rate



Taking the horse's pulse



## MEASURING RESPIRATORY RATE

This can be taken by looking at the abdomen/flank area of the horse to look at the rise and fall. An inhale followed by the exhale equals one breath. Similar to the heart rate, count the number of breaths for 15 seconds and multiply the amount by four to calculate the breaths per minute.