

Preparing for Foaling

Shots

Your mare should receive her spring shots (Eastern and Western sleeping sickness, Tetanus, Rhino, Flue and Potomac) 4 to 6 weeks prior to foaling or at 10 months gestation. She can also be dewormed with Ivermectin at this time.

Caslicks

If your mare has been sutured (Caslicks Surgery), she needs to be opened one month prior to her due date.

Prepare the area

A large (at least 12 foot x 14 foot) clean, dry, draft-free stall should be prepared. If your mare is usually outside, she should be brought into the stall at night several weeks prior to foaling. Clean straw bedding is best for foaling.

Changes in the mare

The following changes are usually noticed as your mare approaches foaling:

- The udder begins to enlarge (2-4 weeks prior).
- The udder secretions turn from clear to milky and sticky.
- The mare's belly drops, around her tailhead the muscles relax or soften.
- Wax or very thick, sticky discharge may form at the end of the teat 24-72 hours before foaling.
- Milk may drip when she is very close to foaling. Contact Great Lakes Equine at 920-779-4444 if this goes on for several days or if a lot of milk is lost.
- Final preparations: when the day nears, clean the udder and vagina with warm water. The tail may also be wrapped, but make sure it is not wrapped too tightly as it can cause vascular damage.

Delivery Kit

You should keep several items on hand, including lots of clean towels, a flashlight to check the mare in the dark, a watch or clock, pen and GLEWC's foal diary sheet, navel dip (1% gentle Iodine or 0.5% Chlorahexadine), small cup for dipping navel, enema (a human fleet enema) and cell phone to call your veterinarian.

It is extremely important that you monitor the mare during foaling. Many foaling problems can be avoided, if caught in the early stages.

