

FOALING NORMALS

Gestation

- Normal 320 - 365 days (340 day average)
- Premature < 320 days. Call the vet. These foals are at high risk of developing complications.

Abnormalities Prior to Foaling

- Vulva discharge, Colic, Depression, Off Feed. Call Vet.
- Running milk. Must check colostrum at foaling.

Stage I (Warm up)

- Record observations (eg. waxed, uneasy, warmed up). These signs can be highly variable. Past foaling records may help.

Stage II (Labour)

- Record time: start when water breaks. Normal is 20 min. ranges from 5 to 60 min.
- Record presentation: (eg. upside down, flexed knee, etc.) and any difficulties during delivery.

Stage III (Placenta expelled)

- *Time:* Normal is 60 min.
- *Behaviour:* It is normal for a mare to be mildly to moderately colicky until the placenta is passed. This is caused by the oxytocin causing contracture of the uterus. Try to avoid giving Banamine, as it will block Oxytocin receptors and delay release of the placenta.
- *Weight:* Normal < 11 % if foal wt. (< 14 lbs.) Remember to subtract the bucket weight!!
- *Placenta check:* Invert placenta (red side out) and spread in a "Y" shape. Note any pieces missing from tips, and any abnormal appearance (any questions call Vet). It is important that the placenta is checked as a retained piece can cause severe uterine infections that may lead to laminitis.

Retained Placenta > 6 hrs:

1. Oxytocin: give 0.5 cc (20 IU) in the neck muscle. Start at 6 hours post foaling and give 1 cc every 4 hours for a total of 4 shots over 16 hours. If mare still has not cleaned, call the Vet.
2. Start Antibiotics: recommend TMS

Post Foaling Mare Check (1 hr.)

- Behaviour: depression, colic, rejecting foal.
- Vulva: tears, abnormal, swelling, profuse discharge.
- Udder: abnormal size, heat, firmness.
- Mucus membranes: Look for red (toxic), or pale (bleeding).
- Temp. 37.5 - 38.5 C.

Colostrum

- Colostrum > 20% Brix (SG >1.06) is normal. Colostrum can be collected for the Colostrum Bank from any mare that has colostrum > 25% Brix (SG >1.07). Use the opposite teat to that which the foal first uses to nurse.

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The time to stand and nurse have proven to be excellent predictors of foal health:

- **Time to first stand** < 2 hrs. is Ok. (Normal = 20-60 min)
- **Time to first nurse** < 3 hrs. is Ok. (Normal = 2 hrs.)

If a foal takes longer to stand or nurse, it is definitely abnormal and a Vet should be consulted.

Periodic Exams: If foal appears weak or abnormal for any reason, call the vet!

- Temperature Normal: 38 C. (37.2 - 38.3 C.): Temp. change - only accurate 1/2 the time (when foal is sick). Watch for hypothermia.
- Respiration Rate Normal: 35 (20 - 40) breaths/min
- Heart Rate Normal: 100 (70-110) beats/min, may well go up when excited (up to 180). Problem if it stays at 120-150
- Mucous Membranes: Look for increased red(injection), yellow (jaundice) or pale (bleeding)
- Decreased nursing - swollen udder, or an increased delay between nursing
- Increased lethargy and sleeping.
- Swollen joints, lameness
- Diarrhea
- Behaviour changes - eg. foal appears stupid, less able to find udder, or runs into walls and wanders.
- Foal Weight: try to check using a bathroom scale (don't get a hernia!), if < 40 kg. (85 lbs.) notify the vet.

If you have any questions at any time, don't hesitate to call the vet!! Don't worry about the time of day or night.