

Treating pain in your horse at home

Nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs

The most commonly used painkillers in horses are a group of drugs called 'nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs'. These work in the same way as 'paracetamol' and 'ibuprofen' that people take, but they are specifically designed medications for horses.

'Bute'

Active drug- phenylbutazone; common trade name- Equipalazone®

Please scan the QR code for a link to the data sheet.

Bute is the most commonly prescribed painkiller and anti-inflammatory drug in horses for oral use.

Bute is routinely administered once or twice a day and is a powder that can be given mixed with a feed or mixed with a little bit of a liquid and syringed into the mouth like a wormer. Mixing the bute with a strong and sweet tasting liquid (such as molasses or custard powder and water) can prevent horses becoming anxious of the syringing procedure. 'Bute' does also come in a paste for oral use but this is expensive and rarely used.

Side effects of 'bute' at appropriate doses are rare but can include stomach ulcers, colon ulcers, diarrhoea, and kidney disease. Be aware that if your horse is ill for any other reason (and especially if it goes off its food), then the risk of side effects of 'bute' may increase.

We recommend if your horse shows colic signs, has loose dropping, stops eating or you notice increased or decreased drinking or urination you should stop the 'bute' and contact us at Bell Equine. If your horse receives an accidental overdose, we also recommend you contact us at Bell Equine.

Horses can NOT enter the human food chain if they have received 'bute'. We must examine the horse's passport and ensure that the appropriate section (Section IX) is signed to ensure that the horse will not enter the human food chain before we can prescribe this medication.



Danilon®

Active drug; oxibuzone; common trade name - Danilon®



Please scan the QR code for a link to the data sheet. Danilon is another commonly prescribed painkiller and anti-inflammatory drug for oral use. It comes in a granular form and can be given in feed or syringed as with 'bute'. Danilon® can be administered once or twice daily. It is a 'pro-drug' meaning it must be metabolised by the liver into 'bute'. It is suggested that it is less likely to cause ulcers than 'bute' and some horses seem to find it more palatable than 'bute'.

Side effects of Danilon® at appropriate doses are also rare but are similar to 'bute' including stomach ulcers, colon ulcers, diarrhoea, and kidney disease.

We recommend if your horse shows colic signs, has loose dropping, stops eating or you notice increased or decreased drinking or urination you should stop the Danilon® and contact us at Bell Equine. If your horse receives an accidental overdose, we also recommend you contact us at Bell Equine.

Horses can NOT enter the human food chain if they have received Danilon®.



Metacam®

Active drug; meloxicam; common trade name- Metacam®

Please scan the QR code for a link to the data sheet.

Metacam works in a similar way to 'bute' and Danilon® is generally associated with less side effects than 'bute' and Danilon®. It comes in a solution which can be added to feed or syringed into the mouth.

Ideally, if mixed with feed, it should be added to a small quantity of feed prior to feeding. It is only administered once daily in most cases.

Side effects of Metcam® at appropriate doses are also rare and are considered to be less likely than side effects from 'bute' or Danilon®.

As the drug works through similar pathways, side effects are similar to 'bute' and Danilon® including stomach ulcers, colon ulcers, diarrhoea, and kidney disease.

We recommend if your horse shows colic signs, has loose dropping, stops eating or you notice increased or decreased drinking or urination you should stop the Metacam® and contact us at Bell Equine. If your horse receives an accidental overdose, we also recommend you contact us at Bell Equine.





Finadyne®

Active drug; flunixin meglumine; common trade name- Finadyne®

Please scan the QR code for a link to the data sheet.

Finadyne® also works in the same way as the other drugs in this group. It comes in a paste which can be syringed into the mouth. It can be administered once or twice daily.

Side-effects of Findayne® at appropriate doses are also rare. Side-effects are similar to 'bute', Danilon®, and Metacam® and include stomach ulcers, colon ulcers, diarrhoea, and kidney disease.

We recommend if your horse shows colic signs, has loose dropping, stops eating or you notice increased or decreased drinking or urination you should stop the Finadyne® and contact us at Bell Equine. If your horse receives an accidental overdose, we also recommend you contact us at Bell Equine.

Occasionally, vets at Bell Equine will choose to use other oral painkillers in your horse or may even give you injectable painkillers to give to your horse. If you have any questions about pain management in your horse, please contact us at Bell Equine.