

# Telephone triage and advice to owners of horses with colic

**1**

## Is it colic?

Is the horse showing any of the following signs?

- Restless or Agitated
- Eating less or droppings reduced
- Abdominal Pain
- Clinical changes
- Tired or lethargic

**2**

## How long?

- When was the horse last seen to be acting normal?
- How long has it been showing signs of colic?

**3**

## Could it be critical?

Is the horse showing any of the following signs?

- Severe, unrelenting pain
- Self-trauma / abrasions
- Dull, depressed and non-responsive
- Unexplained sweating and rapid breathing

**4**

## Inform a vet

- As much information as possible should be relayed
- Potentially critical cases need prioritising for urgent veterinary attention

**5**

## What should the owner do?

- Ensure the horse is in a safe environment
- Rolling should not be prevented
- Do not put themselves at risk of injury
- Do not force horse to exercise
- Decisions – insurance, transport, referral?

Contact details for horse transporters:

Contact details for referral hospital:

Useful links for further information: [www.bhs.org.uk/colic](http://www.bhs.org.uk/colic) for horse owners, [www.react.vet](http://www.react.vet) for veterinary staff