

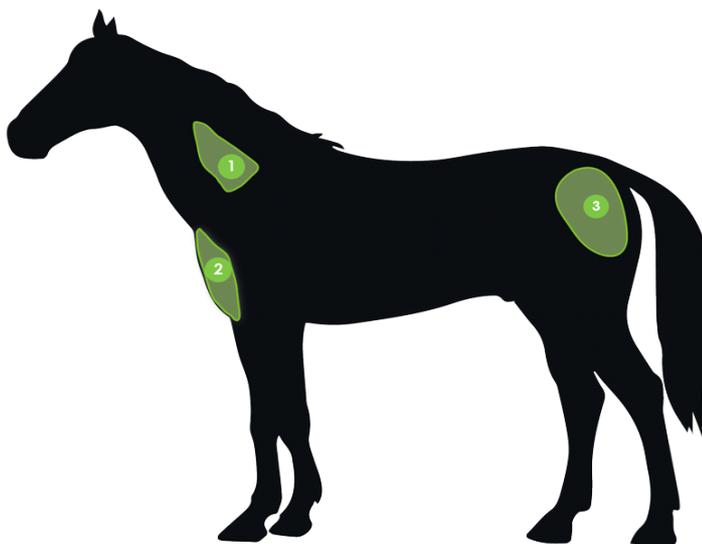
Injections - Guide to Intramuscular Administration in Horses

Most horses will require antibiotics at least once in their lifetime. The intramuscular route is used to administer many antibiotics (eg. penicillin), and occasionally other medications. It is essential that all horse owners are familiar with the correct method of intramuscular administration, as incorrect or inappropriate administration can be potentially very harmful to your horse.

Regardless of the site of administration, several general principles are always important when giving intramuscular injections.

- * Adequate restraint: Safely giving intramuscular injections requires two people, one person to hold the horses' halter, and one person to give the injection. It is important to remember that when our horses are unwell, their 'flight or fight' reflex is heightened, and may kick or strike even if this is very out of character! For this reason it is important that we always consider our safety, always let the horse know where you are, and stand out of their 'kicking zones'.
- * Maximum Volume per injection site: As a general rule, don't administer more than 20mls into any one injection site at a time. This can vary with some drugs, so always check with your horses' veterinarian.
- * Draw Back: It is essential that every time you give an intramuscular injection to your horse that you draw back on the plunger before injecting. This is necessary to check that the needle has not been inadvertently placed into a blood vessel. Remember that large muscle masses have large vessels supplying them.

There are three main injection sites:



NECK (1)

Top : Nuchal Ligament
Bottom: Cervical vertebra (spine)
1 : site of administration

PECTORAL MUSCLES (2)

2: Pectoral Muscle Mass, injection site.

When giving IM injections into the pectoral muscle, stand at the horses shoulder, and using your inside hand, pop the needle into the area shown.

GLUTEALS (3)

3. Gluteal Muscle, injection site. The gluteal muscles can be very useful for giving IM injections, as they are a large muscle mass. However, the skin over these muscles is also thicker, and so more force is required to inject