

# Virginia Equine PLLC

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## Post-Castration Guidelines

After castration, the main guideline to consider is that if at any time after the veterinarian leaves the farm your horse starts to bleed excessively from the castration site, you should call your veterinarian immediately. What constitutes excessive hemorrhaging? If it is dripping from the surgery site faster than you can count the drops and does so for more than 15 minutes.

For the first 12-24 hours after castration, your new gelding is to remain in a stall and quiet in order to minimize the chance of immediate postoperative complications. If anything is noted as hanging down from the surgery site, please call immediately.

Infection is the most common post-castration complication, and our recommendations after the initial stall confinement are designed to minimize the possibility that infection occur. Because there is not a dirtier place on a horse's body on which to do surgery, you can assume that every castration develops some amount of superficial infection. It's when your gelding becomes excessively swollen or febrile that veterinary intervention might again be necessary. Although many veterinarians recommend daily hosing of the surgery site, we currently rely primarily on daily forced exercise and continuous turnout to facilitate drainage and to minimize swelling and infection.

### *Some Additional Rules of Thumb:*

-If your horse has a fever of over 101.5 at any time, please call your veterinarian  
your horse stops eating, becomes overtly depressed, or acts colicky, please call your veterinarian.

-If at all possible, after the initial period of confinement, leave your horse turned out.

-For 30 minutes/day for the first ten days post-castration, get your horse out of a walk. This can be done in many ways, whether it's by riding, longing, etc. We have heard many colorful stories of how people were able to accomplish this recommendation.

-If your horse seems more swollen to you than he did the previous day but his temperature is normal, work him twice that day

-If at any time you are unsure that your new gelding is making proper postoperative progress, call your veterinarian for a consultation.