

Insurance

Owning a horse is a risk and appropriate insurance cover is strongly advised.

We believe that all horses should be insured for third party liability.

In many situations it is also advisable to have more comprehensive insurance cover for your horse. There are numerous policies available and it is important that you spend time investigating the various ones. Whilst we may be able to give some guidance, current legislation only allows registered insurance brokers and agents to give specific insurance advice.

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Main types of cover available

- a) Veterinary Fee Cover
- b) Death (All Risks of Mortality)
- c) Permanent Loss of Use

a) Vet Fee Cover

Vets fee cover pays for non-routine vets bills above an excess for an accident, sickness or disease that first occurs after the inception of the policy. No policy will pick up all the costs. Companies offer a variety of different levels of vets fee cover to suit all budgets. Be aware that some policies are restricted to accidental external injuries only. You need to consider the excess payment, any restrictions on diagnostics and alternative or complimentary treatment cover. Policies will continue to cover the necessary related vets fees, up to the policy limit, for a specified period from the onset of the incident (usually 12 months).

b) Death (All Risks of Mortality - ARM)

This cover is intended to cover the loss of a horse that has to be put down on humane grounds only. The British Equine Veterinary Association (BEVA) has drawn up guidelines to which most insurance companies adhere to.

That the insured horse sustains an injury or manifests an illness or disease that is so severe as to warrant immediate destruction to relieve incurable and excessive pain and that no other options of treatment are available to that horse at that time. Where a horse is exhibiting signs of severe and unremitting pain that can no longer be managed so that no other options are available for treatment, then it is the veterinary surgeon's responsibility to destroy the horse immediately.

In all other cases, (that is where the horse can be provided with effective pain relief), the insurer should be contacted to give their prior agreement or to allow a second opinion to be given by their consulting veterinary surgeon.

Most policies require an appropriate post mortem unless otherwise agreed by the insurer.

c) Permanent Loss of Use insurance

This covers the horse if it becomes permanently incapable of performing the tasks for which it is insured. The definition of specific use will vary depending on the individual policy and company.

There are two distinct types of cover:-

(i) Permanent Loss of Use due to accidental visible external and violent injury only (involving an external wound).

(ii) Permanent Loss of Use due to sickness, disease and accidents.

The injury or illness must commence during the policy year and the Loss of Use must be established within the time limits specified by the policy (usually 12 months from onset of the condition).

Loss of Use insurance does not cover for loss of value, lack of ability, behavioural problems or temporary incapacity.

Policy period – Generally equine policies are 12 month contracts. At the end of the policy period you may be offered a new 12 month contract which will exclude any condition that occurred during the previous policy period.

It is strongly recommended that all horses are appropriately insured.

Guidance for insurance claims procedure

1. Contact your insurance company and ask for a claim form to be sent to you. Check whether they will require continuation forms or if they will accept invoices only for continuing claims.
2. Check your policy wording to establish your excess payment and whether there are any exclusions that may affect the claim. Check whether you have cover for extra's such as farriery, supplements & hospitalisation (alternative treatment).
3. On receiving your claim form, complete all the parts that are for the policyholder to complete, sign the form and then forward it on to your local clinic. If you are not able to pay for the treatment yourself please ask your insurance company to pay Cotts Equine Hospital directly and pay your excess to Cotts Equine Hospital when you send your insurance form to us.
4. We will complete the veterinary part of the claim form, and send it along with any relevant history, reports and invoices directly to the insurance company on your behalf.
5. Settle your excess and any non-insured items directly with Cotts following our standard payment terms.
6. We will endeavour to send on continuation forms / invoices for any more treatment that is related to the claim as soon as the work is done. Certain insurance companies will require you to provide us with continuation forms, completed and signed by yourself, which we will then forward on along with the relevant invoices and reports.
7. Even if you have asked for your insurance company to pay us directly, you will still receive your monthly invoice whilst there is an outstanding balance as ultimately you are responsible for settling the account.
8. Insurance companies are not able to discuss certain things regarding claims with us, and so it remains your responsibility to contact them regularly to check on the progress of your claim.