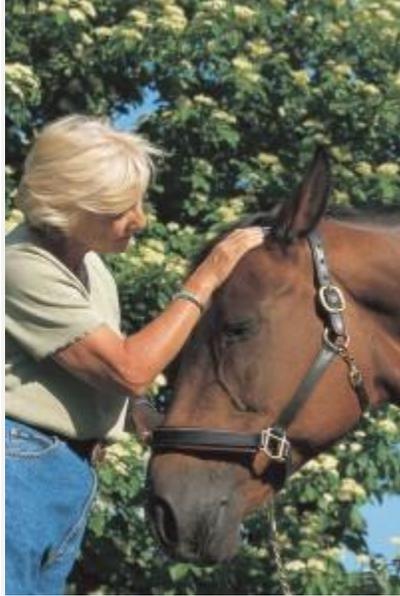


# TTouches for Trail Emergencies

By Cynthia McFarland with Linda Tellington-Jones



Ear TTouches can be used to help alleviate colic or shock

Even the most prepared horse and rider can find themselves in a challenging situation on the trail. When you're far from home — and a veterinarian isn't close by — it's crucial that you know steps to take when a crisis arises. That knowledge and your quick action can make all the difference in the outcome.

Here are six TTouches that can offer help in emergency situations on the trail.

## Ear TTouches

**Use in following situations:** Colic, shock, injury, tying-up syndrome

**What they do:** Calms the horse, reduces pain, lowers pulse and respiration, regulates temperature, helps alleviate shock

**How to perform them:** Slide your hand from the middle of the poll over the base of the horse's ear all the way to the tip of the ear. Emphasize contact with the tip, giving a gentle twist of the tip between fingers and thumb as you glide your hand off the ear. Once the horse is comfortable with having his ears stroked, you can slide your thumb along the inside of the ear as you're stroking the outside. (Note: Ear TTouches should be done vigorously in the case of shock.)

## Belly Lift

**Use for:** Colic, tying-up syndrome

**What it does:** Helps relieve spasms and eases the tension of cramped abdominal muscles, stimulates normal gut action, activates the paristolic action of the gut to relieve pain.

**How to perform it:** Use a large towel folded lengthwise so it's about 6 to 8 inches wide. If there are two people, you can also use a girth or surcingle, or two people can use their arms and lock hands under the horse's belly.



Using the TTouch Belly Lift technique have one person on each side of the horse, hold the towel/girth/your arms under the horse.

Advertisement

<a href="http://ad.doubleclick.net/N7222/jump/EquiSearch.com/Riding\_Training/Training/General\_Training/Article;tile=3;sz=300x250;ord=[timestamp]?"></a>

**With two people:** With one person on each side of the horse, hold the towel/girth/your arms under the horse. Start just behind the front legs. Hold the towel steady and slowly lift until you can't lift any more. Hold about 10 seconds and then SLOWLY release the pressure. It's important to release slowly – ideally, the release time should be twice as long as the lift. Move the towel 4 to 6 inches towards the horse's hindquarters and repeat. Continue Belly Lifts until you are as close to the flank as the horse will allow. Repeat the lifting cycle 3 or 4 times, starting behind the elbow each time. In cases of extreme abdominal pain, the lifts and holds must be shorter. If your horse cannot accept the lifts, the holding period at the top of the lift may have to be left out. Counting out loud seems to relieve many horses. For example, say "Lift, 1, 2, 3, 4. Release, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8."

**With one person:** Drop the folded towel over the horse's back and catch it under the belly. Hold one end a few inches below the spine on your side. The other end of the towel should come up from under the belly. Proceed with lifts as described above, holding steady with the hand on the spine and lifting with the other.

### Tail TTouch

**Use for:** Gas colic.

**What it does:** activates the acupressure gas point to cause the horse to release gas

**How to perform it:** Make deliberate press-and-release circles with fingers 1 and 2, moving in one-eighth inch increments on the acupressure gas point just above the anus and under the root of the tail.

### **Lying Leopard TTouches**

**Use for:** Injury, shock

**What they do:** Reduces pain and prevents swelling in acute injury.

**How to perform them:** The primary connection comes from your partially flattened fingers in this TTouch, not the palm of your hand. Move the horse's skin in a circle with contact from the first two phalanges of your four fingers. Don't press with the heel of your hand as this will flatten your fingers and make it hard to perform circles.

### **Tail Pulls**

**Use for:** Exhaustion, fatigue.

**What they do:** The tail is actually an extension of the nervous system and contains 18-24 vertebrae. Relaxes the horse's neck and back, activates the cranial-sacral fluid that runs through the spine, helps release tight muscles in the hindquarters.

**How to perform them:** Stand slightly to the side of your horse's hindquarters, angled so that your one foot is in front of the other. Hold the horse's raised tail firmly in both hands. Slowly shift your weight from your leading foot to your back foot, applying a steady pull to the tail without bending your elbows. Hold the traction for a few seconds and then slowly shift your weight from your back foot to your front foot, releasing the pull. Releasing slowly is very important. Repeat two or three times.

### **Coiled Python Lift**

**Use for:** Exhaustion, fatigue.

**What it does:** Relaxes muscle tension and spasms in the back

**How to perform it:** Begin at the top of the leg. (For exhaustion/muscle fatigue, work on the inside of the horse's thighs.) Using the flat of your hand, lightly move the skin in a circle with one hand, then push the skin upwards with both hands. Hold for four seconds, supporting the skin as it returns slowly to the beginning place. As you make circles against the skin inside the horse's thigh, you'll want to give a slight lift to the muscles.



Linda Tellington-Jones ([www.ttouch.com](http://www.ttouch.com)) is internationally renowned for creating the Tellington Method, a holistic system of training horses. A seasoned endurance rider, she's won the 100-mile One Day Western States Trail Ride (Tevis Cup) six times, and had held the world record in endurance riding. She's been an official member of the veterinary team for the United States Endurance Team.

Cynthia McFarland is a full-time freelance writer and avid trail rider who writes regularly for national horse publications. She's also the author of eight books.

Posted in General Training | The Trail Rider |