

# Health Care and Veterinary Knowledge

When you own or ride a pony, you need to know when he is feeling well and when he is sick or lame, and how to keep him healthy. Every pony owner should have an “equine veterinarian” (an animal doctor who treats horses and ponies). The veterinarian should check out a new pony before you and your parents buy him to make sure he is sound and healthy. (This is called a “pre-purchase exam.”) He should also give your pony a checkup at least once a year to make sure he is healthy. If your pony gets hurt or sick, if he goes lame, or if you notice another problem (like being too thin or too fat, having a skin rash or a cough, or not eating), you should call your veterinarian. The veterinarian can also give you good advice on worming, feeding, inoculations (“shots”) and other ways to keep your pony healthy.

## WHEN TO CALL THE VETERINARIAN

As you learn about ponies, it is important to know what you can take care of yourself and when to call the veterinarian. It is good to follow these rules:

- If a pony is in distress (won't eat, looks very sick or badly hurt), or you think it is an emergency, don't wait. Call the veterinarian right away.
- If you know there is a problem, but you don't know what