

HOW TO GET THROUGH A VET CHECK WITHOUT GETTING LOST!

Vet checks can be confusing and frustrating places – lots of milling around, lots of yelling, lots of people, lots of horses – all in a small area. If you know how they are set up – what direction the flow is – vet checks become a lot easier.

In the following diagram you will see the flow quite easily – through the in timer, on to the pit crew area, then into the pulse lanes, then into the vet lanes. Not all vet checks are set up the same however, the flow should be about the same.

Come to the IN timer off the trail – get your IN time marked on your rider card. If you are sure your horse had reached criteria go directly to the Pulse lanes. The pulse persons will be standing at the end of the lanes – take your turn and go to them. They do not go to you! They will write down the pulse and the DOWN time and the OUT time on your card. If your horse is not at criteria go back to the PIT CREW area, sponge, loosen girth, get him to drink until you think he is ready to proceed to the Pulse lanes. When you are through the Pulse lane, you may proceed to the Vet lanes (with your rider card) or go back to the pit crew area or your trailer, whichever you prefer. You must go to the vet within 30 minutes of your DOWN time remember, so keep an eye on the clock!

The vet will check the horse's heart rate and ask you to trot out the prescribed 125' and back. While waiting for the time allotted for the CRI (Cardiac Recovery Index) (1 minute from start of trot out) they will check metabolics, gut sounds, wounds, and general appearance. He will then take the pulse again for the CRI. Meanwhile all the data are written on your rider card, which will be handed back to you when complete. After you are through with the vet you may go back to your trailer or to the pit crew area for the rest of your hold time. (In the event that your horse does not vet out, make sure you leave your card with the vet. You will be able to return to the vets when they are not busy for further diagnosis.)

At most rides, the vet will want a trot out under saddle before you leave on the next loop. Call out "Trot out please" and wait till you get a vet's attention then trot past the vet (usually on your way to the trail) You will hear an OK (or not OK) and you are free to go.....

At the end of your hold period make sure you check out with the timer.

Remember, you must present your horse for a completion exam within one hour of finishing. Your vet cards will be kept at that time but will be returned to you at the awards ceremony

Some DO'S and DON'TS:

DO have your horse used to having temperature taken, having pulse taken, having cap refill taken i.e. hands/fingers in mouth, and being palpated all over his body. An unruly horse is an unsafe horse.

DO get your horse (at home or the day before), comfortable with going through lane ways before the busy vet check.

DON'T argue with the head timer, pulse persons, vets or any volunteer. They are VOLUNTEERS!

DO be polite.

DON'T push to the head of the lane.

DO keep a good distance (6') behind the horse in front – there is no point in crowding, you are in a line up!

DON'T put take feed in the vet or pulse lanes. Leave it in the pit crew area. This only stresses out the other horses in the lane. If you must take it, carry it with you in a container (bag/bucket/etc).

DON'T make unnecessary moves or loud noises in the pulse lane. The horses are trying to Pulse DOWN, not UP.

DO keep your dogs at the trailer – they shouldn't be anywhere near the vet or pulse lanes – accidents can happen.

DON'T sponge from the drinking water.

DO remember to breath! RELAX!