Horse Health Education

BECOMING A VETERINARIAN

Discover a Career as an Equine Veterinarian

myHorseMatters.com

HORSE HEALTH EDUCATION: BECOMING A VET

DISCOVER A CAREER AS AN EQUINE VETERINARIAN

Do you own or ride horses, or simply admire the beauty of the horse? Do you enjoy the biological sciences?

If so, choosing a career as an equine veterinarian may be the most rewarding decision you ever make.

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DISCOVER A CAREER AS AN EQUINE VETERINARIAN

No other profession provides such satisfying daily interaction with the horse while offering the unique opportunity to care for one of man’s most majestic friends.

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A WORLD OF OPPORTUNITY

From world-class equine athletes to a child’s prized pony, equine veterinarians ensure the health of a variety of horse breeds involved in a broad range of disciplines.

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A WORLD OF OPPORTUNITY

With nearly 7 million horses in the United States and just as many enthusiasts, the need for quality health care for the horse has never been stronger.

A WORLD OF OPPORTUNITY

It is anticipated that more equine veterinarians than ever before will be needed in the coming years to provide the care that owners desire for their horses as well as to continue the tremendous advances in equine research.
A WORLD OF OPPORTUNITY

Employment opportunities are endless for the equine veterinarian. Most practitioners are employed in private equine practice, where they may run a solo practice or be on staff at a multi-doctor surgical or referral hospital.

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A WORLD OF OPPORTUNITY

Many private practitioners make farm calls to visit their patients. Especially in rural areas, an equine veterinarian’s office may truly be his or her veterinary vehicle, as much of the workday is spent traveling from client to client.

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Equine veterinarians in private practice can expect to work a five- to six-day week.

Other career paths for the equine veterinarian can include teaching and research, regulatory medicine, public health or military service.
A WORLD OF OPPORTUNITY

Technical sales and services, agribusiness and pharmaceutical companies also provide opportunities for practitioners to use their veterinary training.

Veterinarians employed in research at universities, colleges and governmental agencies or in industrial positions are dedicated to finding new ways to prevent and treat equine health disorders.
A WORLD OF OPPORTUNITY

Veterinarians also serve as epidemiologists in city, county, state and federal agencies, investigating animal and human disease outbreaks such as influenza, rabies, Lyme disease and West Nile virus.

Veterinarians also provide disaster/emergency support for our communities.

The United States Department of Agriculture and its veterinarians within the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) monitor the testing and development of new vaccines and are also responsible for enforcing humane laws for the treatment of animals.
GETTING STARTED

Students that are interested in a career within the equine veterinary field should perform well in general science and biology in junior high school and pursue a strong science, math and biology program in high school.

Upon entering college, students must successfully complete pre-veterinary undergraduate course work.

Be sure to speak with your college advisor regarding the classes that are required for a pre-veterinary major, since each college/school of veterinary medicine establishes its own pre-veterinary courses.
GETTING STARTED

Typically, these include demonstrating basic language and communication skills as well as courses in the social sciences, humanities, mathematics, biology, chemistry and physics.

Admission to veterinary school is highly competitive.

Students interested in veterinary medicine should try to gain experience in the field by volunteering or working with a veterinarian during their summer vacations and/or other school breaks.

Applicants may be required to take a standardized test known as the Graduate Record Examination (GRE), and may also take the standardized Medical College Admission Test (MCAT).
GETTING STARTED

The number of qualified applicants that are admitted to veterinary schools nationwide will vary from year to year, but typically one third of all applicants are accepted.

There are currently 33 colleges or schools of veterinary medicine located in the United States, Canada and the West Indies.

Tuition for veterinary school can be expensive especially if one chooses to attend an out-of-state institution. However, many scholarships and financial aid programs exist to help lower those costs.
GETTING STARTED

Each of these institutions also has a student chapter of the American Association of Equine Practitioners (AAEP), which provides students with additional opportunities to explore equine veterinary medicine.

For a complete list of schools and links to their Web sites, visit the Association of American Veterinary Medical Colleges at www.aavmc.org.
After admission to veterinary school, it typically takes four years to complete the required veterinary medical curriculum to earn a Doctor of Veterinary Medicine degree (DVM, VMD, MV or BVSc).

Graduates then may choose to pursue employment opportunities or to gain additional education in various specialties such as surgery, internal medicine, animal behavior, dentistry, reproduction/fertility, ophthalmology, pathology, laboratory equine research or preventive medicine.
A REWARDING EDUCATION

For those graduates who want to receive additional training, internships present an excellent post-graduation option.

A REWARDING EDUCATION

The AAEP’s Avenues Internship/Externship Program aligns the recent veterinary student graduate with an experienced equine practitioner to gain the necessary “hands-on” experience for seeing his/her first patient or dealing with his/her first client.
A REWARDING EDUCATION

Veterinary students who have not yet graduated may apply for an externship to gain practical knowledge during the summer months or other school breaks.

A BRIGHT FUTURE

For those considering a career involving horses, there has never been a better time to become an equine veterinarian.
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A BRIGHT FUTURE

To learn more about this rewarding profession, check out the following online resources:

American Association of Equine Practitioners
www.aaep.org

American Veterinary Medical Association
www.avma.org

United States Department of Agriculture – Animal & Plant Health Inspection Service
www.aphis.usda.gov

Association of American Veterinary Medical Colleges
www.aavmc.org

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A BRIGHT FUTURE

From providing the daily health needs of the horse to developing new and improved treatment options through research, the equine veterinarian plays a vital role in the life of the horse and those who own them.

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The AAEP would like to thank our Educational Partners for their support of the AAEP’s Owner Education Programs

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For more horse health information, visit our Web site:

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