

## What goes into a prepurchase examination?

A prepurchase examination is performed by a veterinarian for the express purpose of uncovering medical conditions for a prospective buyer that may impact the intended use of the horse.

The veterinarian is being compensated by and performing this service for the purchaser of the horse. This examination should be performed with a clear understanding of the specific intended use of the horse over a designated time period.

The prepurchase examination will include historical questions to the seller/seller's agent concerning past medical history as it may relate to the future usefulness, soundness, or health of the horse.

In many instances, a copy of the horse's past medical history may be requested from the seller for the examining veterinarian to review. This may be useful to alert the veterinarian to potential concerns, or it may provide information that may downplay a particular finding on the examination.

The physical examination should include an evaluation of the major physiologic functions and note any abnormalities (conformation, behavior, eyes, heart, lungs, gastrointestinal tract, skin, reproductive tract, dental concerns, etc.).

Hands-on palpation of the skeleton and the legs should be performed to evaluate any abnormal musculoskeletal findings in

light of the intended use. Close evaluation of the feet (including hoof tester response) and any farrier concerns, current or future, should be noted.

Movement evaluation should be performed to evaluate soundness and possible neurologic deficiencies. This may include seeing the horse work in hand, on the lunge line, loose in a corral, ridden, or in harness. In addition, flexion tests of certain joints of the legs can help to evaluate musculoskeletal soreness.

Additional testing can be requested by the buyer in order to obtain further information upon which to base a purchase decision. Radiology, upper airway endoscopy, ultrasonography, and diagnostic bloodwork often are utilized to evaluate areas that may have potential effects on the intended use of the horse.

An overall written summary of the medical evaluation of the horse, complete with copies of any additional testing, should be provided to the potential buyer.

It may include an interpretation by the examiner of any abnormalities and how they potentially could affect this horse in the future at the intended use. The veterinary examiner should contact the buyer/buyer's agent to give a verbal summary of results and be available for questions that the buyer may have regarding the findings of the prepurchase examination.



**Duncan Peters, D.V.M.**

Duncan Peters, D.V.M., graduated with a B.S. from the University of Connecticut in 1974 and completed his Masters at the University of California-Davis in 1976. He received his veterinary degree in 1982 from the University of California-Davis and practiced within a multi-doctor equine practice in Woodside, California, for ten years, focusing on sport-horse medicine and lameness conditions.

A family move to Kalispell, Montana, landed him in a two-doctor, large animal practice which, over his 11 years there, morphed into a four-person, equine-only practice. The practice provided general horse health, medicine, reproduction, lameness, and surgery services for a variety of breeds.

In 2006, Peters joined Hagyard Equine Medical Institute as director of their newly formed Sport Horse Division. His practice focus is locomotor pathology diagnosis and treatment as well as overall management of the sport horse for optimum performance.

Peters is an active member in a variety of sport-horse associations and a multi-disciplined Federation Equestre Internationale (FEI) veterinarian. He is a certified member and board member of the International Society of Equine Locomotor Pathology (ISELP) and a member of the North American Veterinary Regenerative Medicine Association (NAVRMA).

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