

Prepurchase Examinations

The prepurchase exam by definition is a comprehensive exploratory process to evaluate the physical condition of the horse at the time of sale.

The process is by no means painless to either the buyer or the seller. Both parties will likely hear things about the horse's overall health that they would rather not deal with. For the purchaser, however, the results of the examination offers insight, which may save future emotional distress, as well as expense.

A prepurchase strives to accomplish four objectives: 1) To identify existing problems 2) To identify potential for future problems 3) To interpret tests relative to intended use and 4) To establish normal (baseline) values for future comparisons.

A prepurchase is not 1) A warranty or guarantee 2) A pass/fail exam 3) An appraisal of monetary worth or 4) An assessment of athletic ability. (Both 3 and 4 should be the responsibility of either the buyer or the buyer's trainer.)

At Loomis Basin we strive for consistency in our examinations. While at times we may appear overly critical, it is our responsibility to report any findings short of perfection. If, during the exam abnormal findings are encountered, additional special tests may be recommended. These may include radiographs, diagnostic ultrasound, endoscopy or bloodwork. Often times, if a subtle lameness is detected, we may offer to reevaluate the horse in two or three weeks. These minor lamenesses often have a way of disappearing with time.

Some do's and don'ts with regards to a prepurchase exam:

****Do ask your veterinarian to clarify any observation of which you do not understand. There are no dumb questions**

****Do ride the horse (multiple times if possible) prior to the exam**

****Do obtain a good medical history or have the current owner present for questioning at the time of the exam**

****Do have the horse properly shod or trimmed**

****Do expect a written assessment of all the exam findings**

****Do expect to spend 2-3 hours on the examination if necessary**

****Don't use the seller's veterinarian to perform the prepurchase. This constitutes**

a conflict of interest and often times makes for an uncomfortable situation

**Don't bring a horse to be examined who is coughing, has nasal discharge, a fever or is currently on antibiotics

**Don't bring a horse that is on pain medication. Bute and Banamine will mask a number of orthopedic problems

**Don't have a horse shod or trimmed the day before the exam, or bring a horse overdue for shoeing/trimming

The prepurchase exam is a great way to avoid potential disasters. While we cannot foretell the future, we can provide insight as to the significance of past and current abnormalities detected during the exam.