



Is she pregnant?

What now?

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Introduction

- Is being pregnant risky?
- Should pregnant women work / exercise?
- What are pregnant riders at risk of?
- What can you do to minimise the risk?



Is pregnancy risky?

- Yes
- 14 in 100000 pregnancies resulted in death
- Most common cause of death in pregnant women is thromboembolism, then pre-eclampsia, then bleeding.
- Risk of miscarriage = 20%
- Risk factors for miscarriage, ▲ maternal age, previous miscarriage, IVF



Should pregnant women work and or exercise?

- The best thing for you is to have a job
- Exercise is good for you!
 - Less insomnia, stress, anxiety, depression
 - Reduce labour length and complications
 - Improve fetal stress during labour
- BUT
 - Aerobic
 - Strength conditioning
 - Risk of miscarriage ↑ @11-14wks for riders



Physiological changes in pregnancy

- Musculoskeletal changes:
 - Increased joint laxity
 - Joint hypermobility
- Hyperthermia
- Diversion of blood from feto-placental unit
- Change in centre of gravity



Ist Trimester

- May not know pregnant
- Most at risk of miscarriage
- Uterus well protected
- No increased risk of infection



2nd trimester

- Uterus beginning to come out of pelvis
- Increased risk if:
 - Twins
 - Pre-term labour
 - Waters gone
 - Structural abnormalities
- BUT you can win gold medals....



3rd Trimester

- Most have stopped riding
- Bump gets bigger
- Can you get on and off safely?
- Highest risk of pre-term labour?
- General points:
 - Are you / your horse / your surroundings safe?
 - What activities are you doing?
 - Horse care?



Post-partum

- Post-partum exercise benefits
- No effect on lactation
- Pelvic floor exercises
- Gentle start recommended
- Get advice if Caesarean section



Equestrian athletes

- Highly motivated people
- Sometimes need a scare to stop them
- Minimal regulations regarding pregnancy and riding
- Recommend involve obstetrician & governing body
- May need fetal observation
- Expect a drop in performance



What can you do?

- Pregnancy testing
- Pregnancy asking
- Supportive employer (esp children)
- Different trimesters – different response
- Disclaimers?
- Doctor notes?

