



North Queensland Western Performance Horse Club SunSmart Policy

POLICY

Queensland has the highest rate of skin cancer in the world. Of all new cancers diagnosed in Australia each year, 80% are skin cancers. Research suggests that at least two-thirds of all melanomas occurring in Australia could be prevented if children were protected from the sun during their first 15 years.

Skin damage, including skin cancer, is the result of cumulative exposure to the sun. Research shows that severe sunburn contributes to skin cancer and other forms of skin damage such as sunspots, blemishes and premature aging. Most skin damage and skin cancer is therefore preventable.

With this in mind North Queensland Western Performance Horse Club realises the need to protect skin and educate members about SunSmart behaviour, thus reducing the risk of skin damage from exposure to the sun throughout the year.

AIMS

- Promote personal responsibility for skin cancer prevention and early detection.
- Provide environments that support SunSmart practices.
- Create an awareness of the need to support SunSmart practices.

PURPOSE

To encourage all members attending events to be protected from the harmful effects of the sun throughout the year.

COMMITMENT

North Queensland Western Performance Horse Club will:

- Encourage all members to act as positive role models for aspects of SunSmart behaviour.
- Seek ongoing support from members for the SunSmart policy and its implementation through newsletters, meetings, etc.
- Ensure that all members wear hats that protect the face, neck and ears and use a SPF30+ broad spectrum sunscreen when involved in outdoor activities.
- Encourage members without adequate sun protection to use shaded or covered areas.
- Ensure that SPF30+ broad spectrum, sunscreen is included in the Club first aid kit
- Review this policy annually or as required.

EXPECTATIONS

We expect that members will:

- Wear Sunsmart hats and attire eg. Long sleeves and broad brimmed hats where possible.
- Act as a positive role model for other members by practising SunSmart behaviour in support of the North Queensland Western Performance Horse Club

We expect that members will:

- Be aware of the North Queensland Western Performance Horse Club SunSmart policy
- Take responsibility for their own health and safety by being SunSmart
- Wear suitable hats, clothing and sunscreen when participating in outdoor activities.
- Apply an SPF30+ broad spectrum sunscreen.
- Use shaded or covered areas where possible when outdoors
- Act as role models for other members in all aspects of SunSmart behaviour

FOR YOUR HORSE

Everyone is well aware of the damage the sun can do to our own skin; but don't forget that ultraviolet rays put your horse's health at risk too. Sunburn of the de-pigmented (pink skinned) areas on your horse (especially eyes and muzzle) not only looks nasty and is painful for your horse, but it can also lead to serious long term health issues.

Skin cancer, or neoplasia, is the most common type of cancer diagnosed in horses, accounting for 45 to 80% of all cancers diagnosed. Next to sarcoid tumours, Squamous Cell Carcinomas (SCC's) are the most common skin tumour in horses. It is well known that SCC are tumours develop as the result of repeated UV exposure. They often form around the eyes or eyelids and muzzles of light-coloured horses or horses with areas of de-pigmented skin.

So, Your horse has no pink skin? You should safe right? Wrong! The horse's third-eyelid is often de-pigmented, even in black or brown horses and it is just as susceptible to developing SCC's. This is a reason you should put a fly veil on your horses, even if they are coloured. Here are some simple ways to help minimize the risks to your horses when you have them out and about!

- Use UV Blocking Fly masks. One with a nose flap may be necessary for baldy-faced horses to protect right down to the tip of their muzzle. This also helps protect the eye itself and the third-eyelid.
- Bring your UV blocking Day rugs and face masks to protect them during breaks and times you may not be riding.
- When riding, ensure to cover any pink areas, (often on the muzzle and ears) with a good quality Sunscreen, or a thick zinc oxide based cream, eg Filta Back
- Keep your horse in a shaded area whenever possible.

Living in FNQ we are all accustomed to the "Slip, Slop, Slap" routine in humans; so let's make sure we carry that on through to our horses!