SKIN LESIONS FOR HORSES

AWIN training guide

SUMMARY
Definition, brief description of how to assess and score skin lesions in horses
Francesca Dai, Emanuela Dalla Costa, Michela Minero
AWIN Welfare Assessment for horses
GOOD HEALTH

3.1 ABSENCE OF PHYSICAL INJURY

Skin lesions

Definition
Hair discoloration, hairless patches, scabs and wounds are all considered as skin lesions. Their presence can be influenced by the type (e.g. ridden equines vs pack equines), quantity and intensity of work and by the type and quality of the equipment used, as well as the presence of diseases (e.g. ectoparasites).

How to assess
Assess the horse without a rug.
Start with a general visual inspection from the side and assess every area looking for skin lesions.
Ideally divide the horse into 9 areas:
1. Muzzle
2. Head (including the ears)
3. Neck (excluding withers, excluding chest)
4. Shoulder and forehand (excluding elbow)
5. Barrel, girth, back and withers
6. Hindquarters (including croup, thigh, flank; excluding stifle)
7. Upper legs (including elbow, excluding knee; including stifle, excluding hock)
8. Lower legs (including hock, knee, pastern, excluding coronet)
9. Hoofs and coronet

How to score
Use a 5-point scale for each area and count the number of lesion for each score.
Take into consideration only lesions larger on all sides than a 2x2cm square or 1x4 cm rectangle or 2 cm diameter circle.
If more than 20 lesions are present or one lesion is bigger than the palm of a hand is present, count >20.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>No lesion&lt;br&gt;No evidence of injuries or wounds that are worth mentioning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>White area&lt;br&gt;Unnatural patches of white hairs, presumably caused by harness (including halters, bridles, girths, saddles, rugs, tendon boots, bandages, breastcollar, crupper, trace, equipment on the horse that prevents cribbing and weaving)</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Alopecia with intact skin&lt;br&gt;Loss of hair: hairless spot or scar</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Skin lesion&lt;br&gt;Superficial wound where the skin is not perforated, underlying tissue is not visible (scratches, bites, kicks) OR injury with a (minor) cut through the skin</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Deep wound&lt;br&gt;Larger injury, wound through the skin involving damage to deeper tissue, or a larger wound that has not been stitched</td>
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