

WASHING THE SHEATH AND PENIS

About twice a year it is necessary to wash a gelding or stallion's sheath and penis. Washing too often removes natural oils from the horse's skin and changes the natural acidity so don't wash too often.

Dirt can collect above the penis opening and block the urethra making urination difficult. A dirty penis can be uncomfortable causing the horse to kick at his belly or rub his tail.

The first few times you try to wash a horse's penis he may kick. Pay attention to his body language and be careful where you stand. Once they are accustomed to being washed, most horses do not object.

- Mix a bucket of warm soapy water. Use a mild soap.
- Wear rubber gloves as the smell from a dirty sheath is difficult to remove from your hands. Old cotton socks placed over the gloves make a good cloth for washing the penis and you don't have to worry about dropping the cloth.
- Wait until the horse is relaxed and lets his penis hang from the sheath. The penis needs to be withdrawn fully from the sheath. Grasp the penis gently but firmly and gently ease it out.
- Check the penis for dirt. Look for a black, smelly, greasy material, called smegma, and flakes of dried skin.
- Apply the soapy water to the shaft and remove all dirt. Check all folds and creases of the sheath.
- Rinse all traces of soap using a garden hose set on low pressure. Luke warm water is best if you have access. Soap residue can cause severe shaft irritation so make sure to rinse well.