

ABSTRACT

The present diploma thesis focuses on equine-related traumatic injuries. Such injuries occur due to a fall off the horseback and / or during handling or care for a horse. The primary reason for focusing on this specific type of injuries was an increasing incidence of equine-related injuries due to a growing interest in horse riding as a leisure and sports activity.

The theoretical part is divided into several chapters devoted to types and mechanisms of equine-related traumatic injuries, injury prevention, and specific first aid after a fall off the horseback. Information sources for the thesis were identified in the Czech National Medical Library, with most information extracted from the MEDLINE database. Other sources included the Regional Medical Library, the library of the Institute of Agricultural Economics and Information, the regional library, and professional online resources.

Methodology: The second part of the diploma thesis presents the results of a quantitative research and analysis of data extracted from medical records. The data were collected retrospectively for the years 2015 - 2017 in out-patient, standard in-patient and ICU units of a regional hospital.

Objectives: To track incidence of equine-related traumatic injuries and analyse the major causes.

Results: Over the three-year research period, a total of 189 patients with equine-related injuries were treated in the hospital, out of which forty-one were hospitalised, six of them in an intensive care unit. The most frequent cause of injury was a fall off the horseback, and the most commonly affected body parts included the head and neck. Recreational riding exceeded sport riding in injury incidence. The research discovered one case of a serious injury with lethal consequences.

Conclusion: Horse riding as a sport carries certain known risks associated with both riding and handling the animal on the ground. Improved rider education and consistent use of personal safety equipment, in particular helmets, would certainly help reduce the number and severity of such injuries.

Benefits: We have devised a set of recommendations for safe horse handling to help recreational riding providers to prevent injuries.

Keywords: horse accidents; equine-related human injuries; accident prevention; first aid