

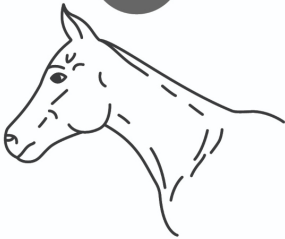
WHAT IS CRESTY NECK?

Neck crest fat in horses has been suggested to be associated with insulin resistance and increased risk for laminitis.

WHAT IS THE “CRESTY NECK SCORING SYSTEM”?

It is on a scale of 0 to 5 where a score of zero equals no visual appearance of a crest and a score of five equals enormous and permanently drooping to one side.

0



No palpable crest.

1



No visual appearance of a crest, but slight filling felt with palpation.

2



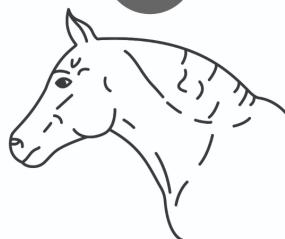
Noticeable appearance of a crest, but fat deposited fairly evenly from poll to withers. Crest easily cupped in one hand and bent from side to side.

3



Crest enlarged and thickened, so fat is deposited more heavily in middle of the neck than toward poll and withers, giving a mounded appearance. Crest fills cupped hand and begins losing side to side flexibility.

4



Crest grossly enlarged and thickened and can no longer be cupped in one hand or easily bent from side to side. Crest may have wrinkles or creases perpendicular to the topline.

5



Crest is so large it permanently droops to one side.

WHEN TO BE CONCERNED

For horses or ponies with a Cresty Neck Score (CNS) of 4 or 5, we must be cautious of feeding diets high in sugar and starch, as these may make any underlying risk for metabolic disease worse.

Scientific Reference:

Carter, R.A. & Geor, R.J. & Staniar, W.B. & Cubitt, T.A. & Harris, P.A. (2009). Apparent adiposity assessed by standardised scoring systems and morphometric measurements in horses and ponies. *The Veterinary Journal*. 179. 204-210.