Ballyclare Off-Track Thoroughbreds

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**THOROUGHBRED CARE GUIDELINES**

This document outlines and defines what adequate care and management is required to provide a thoroughbred with a recipe for success in their new second career homes. These are strongly preferred recommendations by Ballyclare for every thoroughbred owner, and are accumulated from years of experience, national organization recommendations, and consultations from other equine professionals including veterinarians and farriers. Not every horse requires the same exact program, but this provides a comprehensive general overview of acceptable care.

**Facility Guidelines**

* Turn-Out
  + Ample space and time of turnout is crucial for thoroughbreds. Please research your state and county’s suggested acreage per horse, however, a general rule of thumb is 1-3 grazing acres should be available for each horse on a property.
  + New thoroughbreds should be slowly introduced to a herd turnout format. The last time they were turned out with multiple horses may have been their weanling year. It is recommended to start with 1 or 2 herdmates, and work up to larger groups.
  + Separation of mares and geldings should be considered
  + 3 to 4 board wooden fencing is the most ideal fencing. By itself, barbed wire, hot-wire electric fencing, tape hot-wire fencing, and rope fencing are not adequate or safe fencing
  + Thoroughbreds should have access to some type of shelter in their turnout field if out for extended periods of time. Shelters should be able to accompany 2+ more horses than are actually turned out in the field to ensure safe groupings in a confined area.
  + Fresh water is essential in every turnout area
  + Fields should provide enough grazing grass for every horse and/or be supplemented with hay (square or round bales) when grass is not as readily available



* Stalls
  + Having access to a stall with hay and water is highly recommended for all new thoroughbreds, especially during feeding time
  + If stalled, a general rule of thumb is 12 hours inside a stall, 12 hours outside in turnout

**Care Guidelines**

* Feeding
  + New thoroughbreds should receive around 10-12 pounds per day of a high fat (12+%) grain and a constant supply of high quality forage hay a day
  + Alfalfa or alfalfa mix is the most ideal hay. Orchard grass hay should be fed a higher rate than straight alfalfa
  + Some horses may be more aggressive at feeding time than others, and it is recommended each horse be fed in a separate area away from other horses to lower the risk of fighting and injury and to ensure each horse eats the proper amount of feed
  + Please ask your veterinarian before adding additional supplements to your feed
* Medical
  + Fecal egg counts should be done twice a year and an adequate deworming protocol should be followed based on the results
  + Dental floats are essential to the comfort and health of the horse. Power floats or hand floats should be done at least once a year
  + Vaccinations and boosters types and schedules should be determined by your vet and done on a routine schedule
* Farrier
  + Racehorses are used to being shod on all 4 feet while in training and adjusting to different shoeing may take a period of time
  + It is highly recommended your horse remains in at least front shoes while transitioning into post-racetrack life
  + Some thoroughbreds may be able to transition to being barefoot but some may not. Please work with a knowledgeable farrier and your veterinarian to determine the best way to approach shoeing for your new thoroughbred.
  + A 4-6 week farrier schedule is the ideal timeframe to keep a horse’s feet happy and healthy