**Clinical Signs**

Observable signs of colic are varied. Though relatively common, there are no definitive guidelines when diagnosing colic based on clinical signs. Clinical signs have been found to be changes in behaviour and activities that signify the onset and progression of abdominal pain and are associated with different grades of pain. Though they are not confined to their particular categories, they give a clearer idea as to the severity of the pathology and are used to grade colic as such.

Horses with **mild abdominal pain** may exhibit the following signs:

* Decreased/no appetite
* Stretching out
* Spending unusual lengths of time recumbent
* Reluctant to move
* Shifting of body weight between the hindlimbs
* Turning head toward and onto the flank region

In instances of **moderate colic** could present as:

* Grunting
* Repeatedly lying down and getting up
* Rolling when lying down
* Pawing at ground with forelimb
* Continuous movement (in and out of stalls)
* Turning head toward and onto the flank region
* Kicking at the flank

Where there is no immediate medical attention provided to the horse and consequent progression into **severe colic**, the aforementioned clinical signs can manifest, along with:

* Violent getting up and down
* Continuous rolling
* Profuse sweating

These clinical signs may be accompanied by changes that may or may not be directly associated by their change in behaviour such as:

* Abnormal stance
* Reduced faecal production
* Dry/loose faeces
* Weight loss
* Poor hair coat

Identification of any number of clinical signs would provide some rationale for deciding which physical or environmental examinations to conduct to narrow down the potential cause(s) and deciding on what course of treatment to follow.