



Safe riding in snow and ice

Horse lovers like to ride even in the winter. So here are some tips to increase your safety.

Don't ride in the snow unless the area where you are going to ride is familiar to you and you know there are no holes. Snow can cover a hole and your horse can step in it. Depending on the depth of the hole, your horse can end up hurt and you may end up on the ground as well. Also, snow can hide hardware, scrap metal or wood boards with nails sticking up. If you know your surroundings, such as a paddock where you always ride, you and your horse should be fine.

Another consideration is that snow can pack up under a horse's hooves, which can form into a big snow ball, which can be very unsafe for you and your horse. This is less problematic in unshod horses but can happen if their hooves are untrimmed. To prevent that, use cooking spray, petroleum jelly or oil on the hooves before you go out to ride.

Never ride your horse on ice. They can fall and break their limbs, and you can also hurt yourself.

Dr. Fernanda C. Camargo and her friend Skye.



**Read Dr. Camargo's horseback riding safety blog
by following the link at saddleupSAFELY.org.**