



Manitoba  
Horse  
Council

## IS RIDING EXERCISE?

It sure is! Horseback riding has many great health benefits both physical and mental. It is a great way to combine a love of horses with the benefits of physical activity. In fact, some high schools may accept horseback riding as a gym credit. Consult with your child's gym teacher to find out if this applies to you.

## HEALTH BENEFITS

While it may look like the horse is doing all the work, nothing can be further from the truth. A one-hour ride can burn similar calories to that of jogging depending on the intensity of the ride. It is a cardiovascular exercise, and many muscles are in use while on a horse. You may find that out after your first ride!

Physical benefits include:

- Improved balance and muscle strength
- Improved coordination, faster reflexes and increased motor skills
- Stretching of tight muscles
- Decreased spasticity
- Increase range of motion
- Improved cardio and circulation
- Improved visual-spatial perception
- Improved eye-hand coordination.

Mental benefits include:

- Horseback riding is a great way to develop focus and good judgment skills. Your horse will rely on you to make decisions and practice good judgment.
- Riding will help develop your planning skills as well as flexibility in thinking, recall and improved attention.

Horseback riding is recognized as having excellent therapeutic benefits. Being outside and enjoying the fresh air and countryside is a great stress buster. Developing a relationship with your horse is highly rewarding. Learning to control and care for an animal will boost your confidence, develop respect and a sense of responsibility. It assists with development of patience, emotional control, self-discipline, and confidence.

Proud member of



**Manitoba Horse Council Inc.**

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