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As they set out for a short evening ride, they noticed that something was wrong with Sugar, a 3-year old filly. They returned to camp where Sugar began collapsing to the ground. Lori and Rick immediately made the decision to load the horses and head to OSU. On the way, Lori telephoned the after hours emergency number and gave notice that they would be arriving in 10 minutes with a horse they believed was in grave danger of immediate loss of life. Upon arrival, the veterinarians and students of the OSU Center for Veterinary Health Sciences' Large Animal Hospital were waiting for Sugar and prepared for immediate medical treatment.

"I had treated Mariah, another horse owned by Lori and Rick, for colic twice before," reports Dr. Dustin Devine, Equine Surgeon and Emergency Clinician at the Center's Veterinary Medical Teaching Hospital. "However, her situation was treated with medical therapy alone."

"Upon our arrival, Dr. Ryan Royse, came running to our rescue," recalls Lori. "I thought Sugar was going to die. While Sugar was in the examination room, collapsing, we looked up and saw Dr. Devine standing there with his usual quiet, calming, but serious demeanor, and as he examined Sugar, we knew then that she had her best chance possible to survive."



Drs. Royse, Equine Medicine Intern, and Devine quickly assessed the situation and determined that Sugar was suffering from a condition requiring an abdominal exploratory surgery.

“We prepped her for surgery and in approximately one hour, we had opened Sugar, untwisted her colon and put it back where it belonged,” explains Dr. Royse. “Colic is a pretty common problem for horses. Colic is a generic term that means a horse is having abdominal pain. Their large colon is very massive and it has the potential to get twisted, which requires surgery to treat the problem.”

Also assisting with Sugar’s recovery were Dr. Todd Holbrook, Assistant Professor, Equine Internal Medicine, and 4th year veterinary students Amy Royse and Jered Harlan.

“I have been in many, many human hospitals with my family members’ illnesses, and I have never encountered such wonderful personal care (bedside manners) as I have with this OSU team,” says Lori. “OSU Veterinary Hospital is truly a great asset to our state. They have excellent clinical ability, and their personal service is just wonderful. We will continue to be forever grateful for their awesome expertise and personal care.”

Since Sugar’s dismissal from the hospital, Dr. Royse has continued to call and email Lori and Rick to check on Sugar’s progress. Dr. Royce reports that Sugar is on the road to a full recovery and he is glad he was able to help her and her owners.