



## **What is the purpose of shipping bandages?**

Dana Zimmel, DVM

Dip ACVIM, ABVP (Equine Practice)

**UNIVERSITY OF  
FLORIDA**  

---

**IFAS EXTENSION**

Shipping bandages are used to protect the limbs of the horse when traveling. Horses can step on themselves in the trailer during sudden stops or turns and can injure the coronary band especially if they have shoes with traction devices. Shipping bandages will help protect the legs in case of a trailer accident or if the horse is kicked by the horse standing next to it. However shipping bandages may do more harm than good if the horse is not used to bandages on the legs. For example if you try to put shipping bandages on a foal or weanling, chances are the young animals will be kicking more at the leg wraps than if you left them alone. The demeanor of the horse and the duration of travel should factor into the decision of applying shipping bandages to your horse.

There are several commercially available leg bandages marketed for shipping. It is best to pick a shipping bandage that covers at least 1 inch below the coronary band and stops just below the carpus (knee) or hock at a minimum. There are several types that cover the carpus and the hock if the horse requires more extensive protection. Bell boots can be used in addition to shipping wraps to provide more protection. The boots must fit appropriately and the horse must be used to wearing them prior to traveling.