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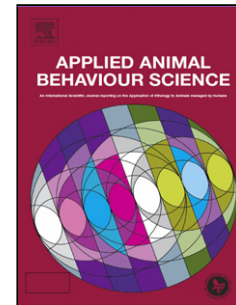
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Indicators of stress in equitation

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Abstract

Stress is a generic concept describing the body's reaction to external stimuli, including both physiological and psychological factors. Therefore, by definition, the assessment of psychological stress in the exercising horse encompasses the problem of teasing apart the psychological and physiological factors both of which result in stress responses. The present study reviews the existing literature on various measures of stress taken specifically in the context of equitation science. Particular attention has been paid to short-term effects, and commonly used measurements of short-term stress include heart rate, a number of heart rate variability parameters, blood or saliva cortisol levels, eye temperature, and various behaviour parameters including in particular behaviour patterns presumably indicative of conflict with the rider's/trainer's aids. Inspection of the individual studies' results revealed that disagreement

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