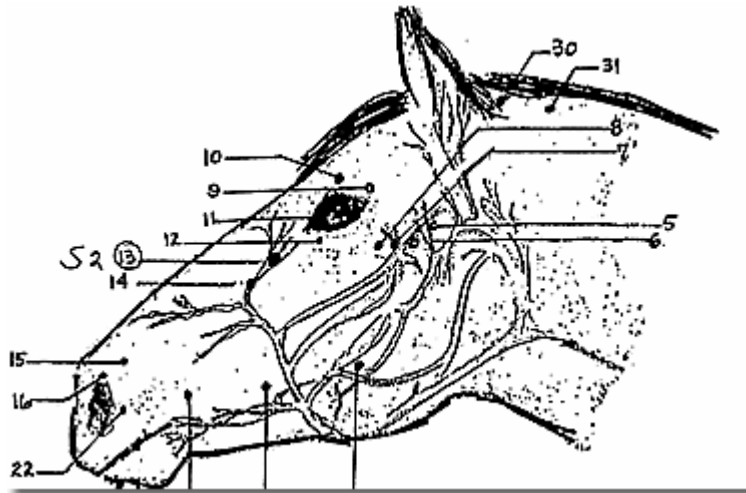


## Circulatory System



[http://www.holisticvetpetcare.com/images2/horse\\_sideview.gif](http://www.holisticvetpetcare.com/images2/horse_sideview.gif)

The circulatory system of horses includes capillaries, veins and arteries, the system of blood transport through out the body, and the heart, the organ that pumps the blood through out the large body.

At rest a horses heart beats 35 times in a minute but anything can increase or decrease a heart beat, such as exercise and age. The heart rate is also a way to determine if a horse may have a medical condition that needs attention.

Arteries are muscular tubes that carry blood away from the heart and to all the parts of the body. Arteries decrease in size as they move away from the heart and begin to branch. They carry oxygenated blood to the rest of the body. They do this by turning into arterioles and then very small tubes known as capillaries. This is the site of oxygen exchange. Once the oxygen has been given to the parts of the body the capillaries turn into venules and then into veins which help carry the deoxygenated blood to the lungs to get reoxygenated again. Muscle pressure in the legs, help the veins carry the blood back up the body. This circulation is very important for the health of the horse, especially during exercise when the horse's body needs the most oxygen.

The circulatory system is important when needing to draw blood from the horse to run tests. There are three primary places that this is done; the most common is the vein in the neck known as the jugular vein, a in the leg, and by scraping the buccal, or cheek region inside the horse's mouth.