

**STOP THE SESSION IMMEDIATELY if the rider experiences any of the following:**

- ❖ Nausea or vomiting
- ❖ Sudden or severe headache
- ❖ Abnormally stiff and painful neck
- ❖ Loss of consciousness
- ❖ Significant change in behavior from previous sessions

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**Asperger's Syndrome**

- These riders have lack of coordination and social awkwardness.
- **Avoid making jokes or sarcastic statements.**
- **Try to remain calm since they may become nervous or anxious.**

**Autism**

- These riders resist environmental changes or changes in daily routines, have difficulties with social interactions, and have unusual responses to sensory experiences.
- **Try to avoid introducing too many new things at once.**

**Cerebral Palsy**

- These riders have a lack of coordination, balance problems, shortness of breath, excessive drooling, and either stiff or floppy arms and legs.
- **Break down the tasks and work on one step at a time.**

**Down Syndrome**

- These riders have weakness and extra flexibility.
- **Make sure they do not have atlantoaxial instability (according to an x-ray).**

**Duchenne's Muscular Dystrophy**

- These riders have weakness, lack of coordination, and an increased arching of the back.
- **Avoid fatigue.**
- **Pay attention to sitting posture.**
- **Include lots of stretching exercises.**

**Multiple Sclerosis**

- These riders have numbness, tingling, pain, or weakness in parts of the body as well as muscle spasms, unsteadiness, fatigue, and dizziness.
- **Avoid fatigue.**
- **Avoid forward bending of the head.**
- **Avoid heat.**

**Seizure Disorder**

- These riders may have a variety of seizures that result in weakness, a loss of consciousness, or shaking.
- **If the rider has a seizure, perform an emergency dismount, place the rider on his/her side, and try to avoid injury.**
- **Avoid bright flashing lights.**

**Spina Bifida**

- These riders have paralysis of the legs.
- **Avoid extreme stretching of the neck or bending the head forward.**
- **Avoid extreme pressure or torque to avoid fractures.**

**Spinal Cord Injury**

- These riders have loss of movement or sensation below the level of injury, loss of balance and trunk control, spasms, stiff muscles, and difficulties breathing or coughing.
- **Watch for sweating, a slowed heart rate, a pounding headache, and a feeling of anxiety, indicating autonomic dysreflexia (a MEDICAL EMERGENCY).**
- **Avoid sliding the rider on any surface since they may not have sensation and will not feel skin damage.**

**Stroke (Cerebrovascular Accident or CVA)**

- These riders have weakness or numbness on one side of the body or face and balance problems and may tend to ignore one side of the body.
- **Try to involve the weak side in as many activities as possible.**

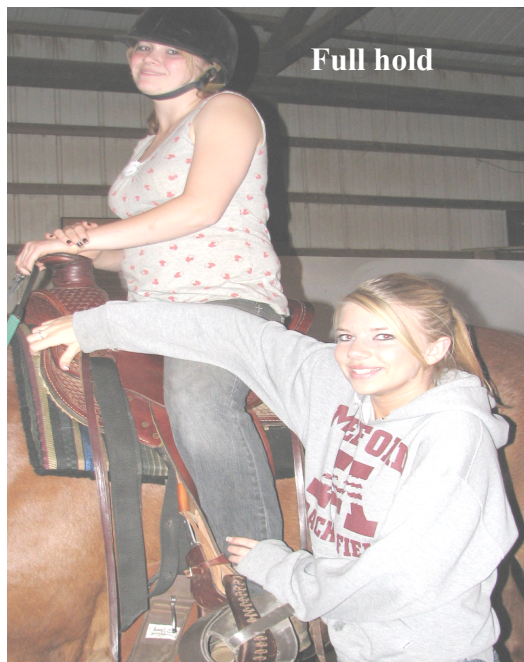
**Traumatic Brain Injury**

- These riders have concentration problems, dizziness, balance problems, blurred vision, weakness, and may become easily agitated.
- **Do not disagree with them unless their safety is at stake.**
- **Keep them focused on the task at present.**
- **Start with very simple tasks.**

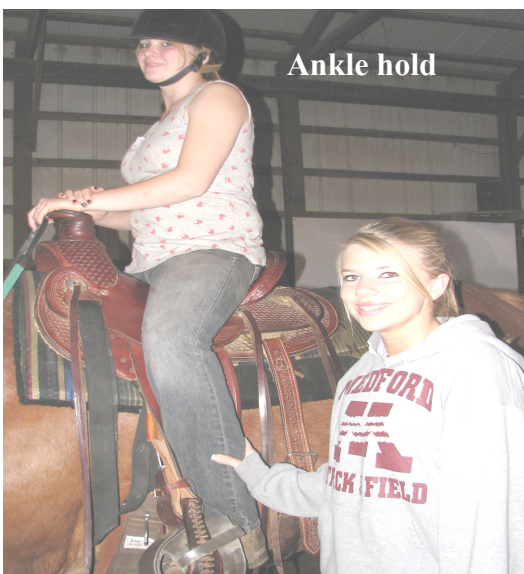
**Full Hold with Back Support**



Full hold w/back support



Full hold



Ankle hold

# Common Conditions of Participants in Hippotherapy

This pamphlet provides information about several of the conditions that are commonly seen in people who participate in hippotherapy. Although it is not an all-encompassing list and does not provide all the details of each condition, it highlights some symptoms to be aware of and provides some suggestions as to how to make the riding experience as effective and enjoyable as possible.

The information included in this pamphlet was obtained from:

- ❖ *Physical Therapy for Children* by Campbell, Linden, and Palisano
- ❖ *Pathology: Implications for the Physical Therapist* by Goodman, Fuller, and Boissonnault
- ❖ *Diseases and Conditions A-Z* by Mayo Foundation
- ❖ [www.mayoclinic.com/health/DiseasesIndex/Disease-sindex](http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/DiseasesIndex/Disease-sindex)