

A horse is a horse—and sometimes part of a clinical team, too

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Classifying the types of equine-assisted activities and therapies

This chart compares equine-assisted activities (EAAs) with equine-assisted therapies (EATs), including the subcategories within each. *Equine-assisted activities and therapies* (EAATs) is the umbrella term covering everything offered in this field. The word “assisted” means the service is done in partnership with a horse.

Be aware that for equine-facilitated psychotherapy and equine-assisted psychotherapy, the terms “assisted” and “facilitated” aren’t based on research. The variation in terms adds to the confusion of both the public and healthcare providers as to what these services provide. Instead of going strictly by the name of the service, it’s best to find out exactly what the specific service offers and the experience and background of the person providing it.

	EQUINE-ASSISTED ACTIVITIES (EAA)		EQUINE-ASSISTED THERAPIES (EAT)		
	Therapeutic horseback riding	Equine-facilitated learning	Hippotherapy	Equine-facilitated psychotherapy	Equine-assisted psychotherapy
Provider	Certified therapeutic riding instructor	Any of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Certified therapeutic riding instructor (must be present for mounted activities) • Educational practitioner • Professional development coach • Life coach <i>Plus:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equine specialist in mental health and learning 	Physical therapist, occupational therapist, or speech/language pathologist with specialized education to provide this type of therapy (such as a hippotherapy clinical specialist). Therapist works with a certified therapeutic riding instructor or serves in a dual role.	Master’s or doctorally prepared licensed mental health professional and an equine specialist in mental health and learning <i>Plus:</i> Certified therapeutic riding instructor (must be present for mounted activities) <i>Or:</i> Any of the above serving in a dual	Master’s or doctorally prepared licensed mental health professional working with an equine specialist. Equine Assisted Growth and Learning Association certification is available.

		<i>Or:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> any of the above serving in a dual role 		role	
Location of activity or therapy related to horse	Mounted, ground, or both	Ground; sometimes mounted	Mounted	Generally ground; sometimes mounted	Ground work only
Patient goals	Provider and participant may or may not set goals.		Rehabilitative or habilitative goals relate to the patient's needs and the healthcare professional's standards of practice.		
