A pressure test in horses is typically performed to assess the severity and potential complications of wounds, particularly in areas with complex anatomy or where the underlying structures are not easily visible. It involves applying gentle pressure around the wound to detect any abnormal communication between different tissue planes, such as the presence of a tract leading to a joint or a body cavity.

The pressure test is commonly used in cases where a wound may have penetrated deeper tissues, and there is a concern about the involvement of joints, synovial structures, or other vital anatomical areas. The test helps identify if there is a communication between the wound and these structures, as it may not always be evident on a superficial examination.

Here's a general process for performing a pressure test in a horse with a wound:

1. **Cleaning the wound:** Before performing the pressure test, the wound should be thoroughly cleaned to reduce the risk of infection. This may involve irrigation with a sterile solution and removal of any debris or foreign material.
2. **Gentle palpation:** The veterinarian or caretaker will then gently palpate (touch and feel) the area around the wound. The goal is to identify any unusual swelling, heat, or pain that might indicate deeper involvement.
3. **Pressure application:** Pressure is then applied around the wound. This can involve squeezing the area, applying pressure with a thumb, or using a specific technique based on the location and nature of the wound.
4. **Observation:** During the pressure test, the examiner closely observes the horse for signs of discomfort, abnormal reactions, or any discharge from the wound that may indicate a connection to deeper structures.

. If the test suggests communication with a joint or body cavity, it can indicate a more serious condition that may require prompt and specific treatment.