



WOUND MANAGEMENT & VACCINATION

Wounds are a very common problem encountered in equine veterinary practice. They can vary from small puncture wounds to extremely large muscle tears like the wound profiled above. "Timmy" is a 10 yo grey Quarterhorse gelding who jumped a wire fence and unfortunately lacerated the axilla between the chest and forelimb to a depth of over 50 cm. After a long rehabilitation and fantastic care and attention by his owners, we are pleased to report "Timmy" is now almost fully recovered.

Almost all wounds should be checked by a horse vet, because even small wounds can cause life threatening infections if they involve joints, tendon sheaths or bursas. We can then decide if antibiotics, anti-inflammatories or wound debridement is required. Another important thing to remember is to make sure your horse is up to date with tetanus vaccination. Tetanus is a potentially fatal infection that can occur with the smallest graze or damage to the skin. It occurs when a wound gets infected with the bacterial spores of *Clostridium tetani*. The spores germinate, multiply and then produce a powerful toxin which affects the muscles. It causes the muscles to become very stiff, and some horses develop a rigid "sawhorse" stance. Occasionally the facial muscles become tense which is where the term "lockjaw" originates. Convulsions and death can occur if the breathing muscles become affected. It should be remembered that

horses are far more susceptible to tetanus than other species. If your horse has not been protected against tetanus and sustains a wound, an injection of tetanus anti-toxin is given. This provides immediate short term protection against tetanus.

Vaccination is the only way to prevent tetanus. We use a combined 2 in 1 vaccination that protects against tetanus and strangles. Strangles is a respiratory bacterial infection caused by *Streptococcus equi*. It causes a fever, purulent nasal discharge, depression, cough and large pus filled abscessation of the lymph nodes around the head. This is how the disease got it's name, as the abscesses' can occasionally block the airways and cause respiratory distress. Strangles is a very contagious disease that can spread very quickly through an unvaccinated population. Horses at risk include those that are unvaccinated that mingle with other horses at pony clubs, events, competitions, agistment centers and studs. The disease can be spread from a recovered horse for over 8 months after the original infection, even though they may appear clinically normal.

For primary vaccination in horses older than 3 months, 3 vaccinations should be given 2 weeks apart. Then booster shots are given annually. Please feel free to contact us about any wound or vaccination query you have.

THE EQUINE PRACTICE

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Dr Christian Borg
Dr Arnold Hennel

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WELCOME MEGAN!!

We would like to welcome Megan Basterfield to our team at The Equine Practice. Megan will be working with Sue in the office, and has extensive experience having owned horses and worked within the horse industry for many years.

Megan is replacing Karen, who has recently been accepted into the Victoria Police Academy. Karen will be missed, and we are sure she will make an excellent police officer!!!



NEW SENIOR HEALTH CHECK

We are pleased to announce a new initiative designed to help the more senior members of our horse population. The old adage, "prevention is better than cure", is certainly true for older horses. With that in mind, we are now offering an annual senior health check for horses aged 20 or older.

This health check is designed to pick up problems that are specific to the aged horse, before they become debilitating. In particular, dental care, weight loss, arthritis, vision, metabolic abnormalities (cushings disease) and organ function are areas that should be checked annually.

The advantage of having a routine annual check is to pick up problems early, and the senior health check will be less expensive than a standard consultation.

Please feel free to call the clinic to discuss your senior horse at any time.

WEBSITE

Please check out our new and improved website at

www.theequinepractice.com.au.

We hope you find it to be informative and interesting!! If you have any ideas or topics you would like included on our website, we would love to hear from you.

MICROCHIPPING, DENTAL AND VACCINATION DAY

We are having a day during August where we can microchip, perform a dental and vaccinate your horse. It will be held on a weekend to assist those of you who find it hard to get time off work or study during the week. In addition, we are able to perform these procedures at a reduced rate!! Please contact the clinic on 1300 762224 if you are interested in booking your horse in. Further detail on the exact date and location will be finalised soon.

If you wish to unsubscribe to this newsletter please contact the office



COLIC

Unfortunately, colic is a very common medical problem encountered in veterinary practice. The word "Colic" is a broad term used to describe gut pain in the horse. The clinical signs of colic are rolling, pawing the ground, getting up and down, looking around at the abdomen, thrashing, sweating, lethargy and not passing droppings. Broadly speaking, colic can be categorized into two groups. **Medical** colic that responds to treatments such as fluids, pain relief, gut relaxants, parafin oil etc. **Surgical** colic that requires specialist surgery to correct gut displacements, twists or torsions.

Colic is a condition that should always be checked by a vet. If your horse is rolling, encourage the horse to get up and walk around until we arrive. This could prevent the gut from twisting. It is very important to correctly determine whether the colic is medical or surgical. Early referral in surgical cases can give your horse a much better chance of survival. Thankfully, the majority of colic cases are successfully treated by correct medical intervention at your property. There are numerous risk factors that could be involved in colic. Parasites, change of diet, change of season, stress and poor dental care are all possible causes of colic. The Equine Practice offers a 365 day 24 hour on call emergency service to help your horse during the stressful time when your horse gets colic.

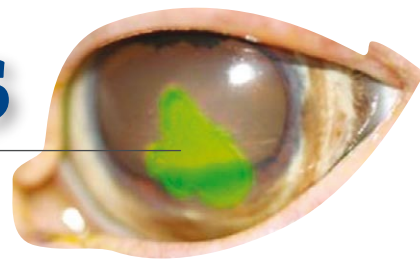


REPRODUCTION

With the breeding season fast approaching, it will soon be time for broodmare owners to think about whether they will breed again this season. We can assist you during this breeding season with all your chilled AI or frozen AI requirements. We have a crush available so we can ultrasound your mare in a safe environment. We also have liquid nitrogen tanks to store frozen semen.

If you wish to discuss any queries about your mare, please feel free to give Arnold or Christian a call

eyes
fluorescein



Eye pain is a very common problem we encounter in equine veterinary practice. The clinical signs that may alert you to a problem with your horses' eyes are squinting, ocular discharge, redness, swelling, lumps, cloudiness or bumping into objects. It is very important that a thorough eye examination is undertaken to determine the cause and appropriate treatment for the eye condition. This may involve the use of fluorescein strips, which is a dye that highlights any scratches or ulcers on the cornea.

We also have an ophthalmoscope, which is a special instrument to visualise the retina and optic disc at the back of the eye. We can see scarring, degeneration or cataracts with this device. We would also check the eyelids, including the third eyelid, during any eye examination. Sometimes foreign bodies can hide behind the third eyelid and cause pain. The third eyelid is also a common site for tumour growth, in particular, when there is a lack of pigment in the eye tissues. If there is any eye condition that we are particularly concerned about, we work in with a specialist ophthalmologist who has a particular interest in horses.

Please feel free to call the clinic and chat to Arnold or Christian if you have any questions about your horses' eyes.



SARCOIDS

Sarcoids

Sarcoids are a common type of skin tumour in the horse. It is currently thought that a virus is involved as the underlying cause. There are many different types of sarcoid. Occasionally a biopsy is required to confirm the diagnosis. A fibroblastic sarcoid is an aggressive tumour which can look like proud flesh. Some sarcoids are wart-like in appearance and others are flat with small bumps and hair missing. Treatment will depend on the location, type and whether the sarcoid is interfering with function or cosmetic appearance. We have many treatment modalities available to us to help combat sarcoids. Unfortunately they can be very resistant to treatment, however, we have successfully treated many sarcoids over the years using one or more of the following treatment modalities: surgical excision, cryotherapy, topical creams, intra-lesional drug injections or vaccination.

There is a topical cream called Aldarra that we have had very good success with in the treatment of some types of sarcoids. This is a human cream used to treat skin tumours and viral infections in people. Feel free to give us a call if you want to discuss your horses' skin disease.



POWERFLOAT



Dental care is a very important part of your horses' regular health program. We routinely use hand tools to care for your horses' teeth and remove sharp enamel points that occur during normal wear.

These sharp points can cause ulcers or lacerations in the cheeks or tongue. Occasionally, hand tools are not sufficient to correct the dental imbalance in the mouth. This may be the case in teeth that have not been floated for a long time, in elderly horses, in horses with teeth missing or in mouths with congenital problems.

This is where the powerfloat is an invaluable tool to help restore your horses' mouth to a more normal state. Both Arnold and Christian have attended additional training seminars in the safe use of the powerfloat. This is only used when absolutely necessary, and routine hand tools are used for most dentals.

We have seen a significant improvement in the quality of life of many horses after treatment with a powerfloat. We usually use sedation for our dentals because we can do a more thorough job and it is less stressful for the horse. If sedation is required, it is at no extra cost.