



SPRING PADDOCKS EQUINE
VETERINARY SURGEONS

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NEWSLETTER • AUTUMN 2020

We have been back up and running and feeling almost normal here at Spring Paddocks whilst still adhering strictly to our COVID-19 safety protocols.

It's been lovely to see some of our clients (and a few members of staff) able to get their horses out and about competing and enjoying fun rides again after such a long break!

We always love to hear from you and see pictures of your achievements.



Foot Abscesses

With the very dry and then wet weather we have been experiencing over the last few weeks, we are seeing a huge increase in foot abscesses.

Abscesses are often caused when small holes or a crack occur in the sole or white line which can lead to bacteria getting into the foot and setting up a localised infection.

What should you to look out for:

- 🐾 Usually, in one foot - a moderate to severe lameness
- 🐾 Sudden onset of lameness, sometimes following exercise or turnout
- 🐾 Small black/discoloured defects in the sole or white line
- 🐾 Increased heat and digital pulse
- 🐾 Smelly pus oozing from the sole, frog or the coronet band
- 🐾 Finding an abscess during routine foot trimming
- 🐾 Occasionally there may also be pastern swelling and cellulitis



Treatment

- 🐾 Always contact your vet or farrier for specific advice relative to your horse's condition.
- 🐾 In the meantime, you can 'hot tub' the affected foot 1-2 times daily in Epsom salts/iodine solution
- 🐾 Apply a hot wet poultice or dress the wound with povidone-iodine soaked swabs and bandage
- 🐾 The use of antibiotics is only recommended in very severe cases and on veterinary advice
- 🐾 Anti-inflammatory (Bute) may be given if very painful but they can also mask any deterioration of the abscess, so should only be given on the advice of the vet.
- 🐾 In all cases it is important to keep the horse stabled on a clean dry bed

If treated early, foot abscesses are simple to treat and will resolve quickly. However, in rare occasions or if abscesses are deep, the infection can extend to the deeper structures of the foot (pedal bone, navicular bursa, coffin joint and deep digital flexor tendon).

If these structures become infected the condition can become potentially life-threatening so it is always very important to call us straight away if you suspect your horse might have a foot abscess.

Gastric Ulcers

What are gastric ulcers?

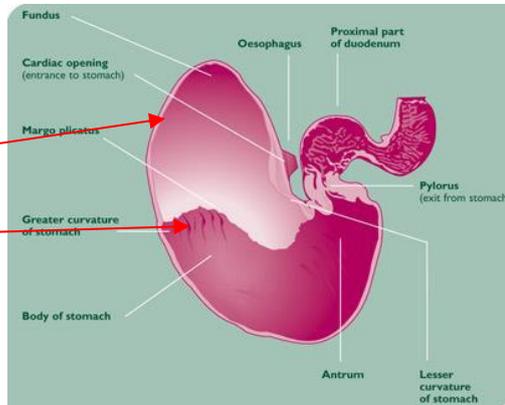
A Gastric Ulcer is a description of an area of the stomach lining which has been eroded or damaged.

How do I know if my horse has ulcers?

Adult horses with ulcers typically display non-specific signs, including abdominal discomfort (colic), poor appetite, mild weight loss, poor body condition, and attitude changes such as being girthy or generally grumpy.

There are 2 types of ulcers in horses, affecting different areas of the stomach:

- Non-glandular
- Glandular



Non-glandular ulcers:

This area of the stomach is poorly protected against the acid which normally sits in the lower Glandular region. It is therefore prone to acid damage, especially when this acid level builds up as a result of;

- Inadequate fibre intake
- High concentrate diet
- Stressy behaviour

These ulcers usually respond well to medication and management changes.

Glandular ulcers:

This area of the stomach is very well protected against acid damage as it is where the stomach acid normally collects. Ulcers in this region remain relatively poorly understood, but are thought to be caused by a restriction in blood flow to the area. It is suggested that these can be caused by the following;

- Intense exercise (as the blood flow to the stomach is reduced)
- Illness (as blood flow is often reduced in the stomach)
- Medication
- However, some horses presenting with glandular ulcers do not fit this pattern.

Treatment is more difficult for these glandular ulcers but usually consists of a combination of treatments tailored to the individual horse, alongside management changes.

Gastroscopy:

Gastric ulcers are diagnosed using a gastroscope – a camera which is passed into the stomach to visualise the stomach lining.

GASTROSCOPY CLINICS

This autumn, we have planned for two sponsored **discounted** gastroscopy days, the **21st September** and the **12th October**. On these days a gastroscope will cost only **£100**. There are limited spaces so if you have reason to suspect your horse may have ulcers, book in a.s.a.p. to avoid disappointment.

MICROCHIPPING

On 1st October 2020 legislation will come into force that requires ALL EQUINES (including donkeys) to have a registered and working microchip, regardless of age, type and their use.

Failing to do so could leave you facing sanctions from your local authority including a compliance notice and a fine of up to £200.

Foals must be microchipped by the age of 6 months, or before the 31st December of the year they were born.



Microchipping your horse will mean that your horse's details can be checked on a national database. You will also be able to check the details of a horse you plan to buy or report your horse missing should it ever be lost or stolen.

If you are unsure whether your horse has a microchip or would like to know if it is working, all our vets carry scanners in their cars and will be happy to check your horse free of charge the next time they visit.

Scheduled client evenings and demonstrations

We currently have a client evening - **'Caring for the older horse' planned for 29/09/2020** – this will dependant on COVID-19 restrictions, if you are interested in attending, please let the office know but be aware that we may have to cancel at last minute.