



SPRING PADDOCKS EQUINE  
VETERINARY SURGEONS

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## Christmas 2021



*Everyone here, at Spring Paddocks, wishes you a very Merry Christmas and a Happy and Successful New Year*

2021 is now drawing to a close and after an extended period of lockdown, competitions opened up again and life appeared to return to some degree of normality, but with cancelled client evenings and events at the clinic we have missed the personal contact that we have become so used to at Spring Paddocks.

We are therefore busy putting together a programme for 2022 - this will also include some external speakers who will be here to discuss your current equestrian concerns & bring you up to date with current thinking and treatments. Keep an eye on our website where these dates will be posted.

Carys has had a busy and successful summer competing internationally with the GB vaulting team. We are also delighted to let you know that she is now **British Vaulting Champion** – many congratulations to her and her team for all their hard work and dedication.



### Gastroscoy Clinics

Our discounted gastroscoy clinics are very popular and we will be running these again next year with the first date on **Friday 28th January 2022**.

Gastroscoy allows our vets to check your horse for gastric ulcers which can be responsible for behavioural problems and poor performance.

If you are concerned that your horse may be suffering from gastric ulcers, our vets would be happy to discuss the options with you.

### VACCINATION

It is advisable to double-check that your horse's vaccinations are up to date and check competition requirements for the forthcoming season – some governing bodies are still requiring **6 monthly influenza** boosters.

**(Please be aware, outbreaks of flu are being recorded as close as Worcester).**

We will endeavour to remind you whenever possible, but please remember it is still your responsibility to ensure that your vaccinations fulfil all the current requirements for your discipline.

**Pregnant mares** should receive **Equine Herpes Virus (EHV) vaccinations** at months 5, 7 and 9 of pregnancy as this virus is known to cause abortion.

It is also advisable to give **a tetanus booster** to your mare during the last month of pregnancy to ensure good transfer of antibodies to the foal.

Remember that **ALL horses** should be vaccinated for **tetanus** every two years as this often-fatal toxin lives in the soil and vaccination will offer protection in the event of your horse sustaining e.g. a wound or a foot abscess.

## Increased risk of Impaction Colic

Whilst grazing horses obtain 80% of their water intake from grass, any climatic change whether it be too hot or too cold can result in fluid uptake being dramatically reduced. This lack of fluid in the digestive system causes an increase in dry matter, leading to an impaction and colic.

Prevention is mainly anticipating these changes and increasing the fluid in the diet by feeding mashes, wet hay and making sure there is always a plentiful supply of fresh water.

Contact the clinic if you are at all suspicious that your horse may be starting to colic as the quicker these are treated the less likely they are to progress to something more serious.

## Azoturia/Tying up

Similarly, if we get a cold snap and your horse is on reduced exercise and turnout, remember it is essential to reduce food, especially carbohydrate intake. This will reduce the risk of upsetting your horse's metabolism which causes them to potentially 'tie up' – not only is this extremely painful but in severe cases can be career ending and needs to be treated as an emergency.

## Winter Worming

Responsible worming of our horses is becoming all important and most of you have carried out WECs over the summer months but now, once there has been a sustained period of cold weather, is the time to consider worming for bots and encysted larvae that burrow into the gut at this time of year. Traditionally we would worm all horses for these, however there is now a blood test available for horses who have had consistently low WECs all summer to determine whether encysted red worms are present.

Please feel free to contact the clinic and discuss your requirements with one of the vets.

## COVID UPDATE

Following the relaxation of government guidelines regarding COVID-19, we have opted to keep our waiting room and clinic closed to clients for the foreseeable future. For us to give your horses the optimum level of care, it is vital that we protect our small team where we can.

## Equine Asthma Syndrome

With horses stabled during winter months there is an increase in Equine Asthma Syndrome (also known as RAO, HEAVES or COPD) as there is more contact with dust and the fungal spores found in hay, straw and the general stable environment.

Horses suffering from this condition will often display with a dry, non-productive cough, lethargy, clear nasal discharge and may have heave lines in more chronic cases.

Dry, dusty environments, shared air space in barns especially alongside feed and bedding stores often exacerbate the issue and make the symptoms more severe.

As with human asthma, equine asthma has to be treated by a change in management as well as medication where necessary.

Environmental management is key and very often requires

- Improved air circulation around the barn or stable with open doors and windows.
- Avoid the use of leaf blowers to tidy the yard (they elevate the dust). If used, it must be when the horses are turned out or on exercise.
- Store hay and straw in a separate building where necessary.
- Check hay and bedding is not dusty or mouldy and if necessary use a steamer .
- Turn out as much as possible to avoid the above, weather & yard protocols permitting.

We now have a variety of medications available to help alleviate asthma symptoms.

The newly released Equihaler has proved to be a success with many horses, especially those who have previously been difficult to manage.

## Free Zone Visits

Just a gentle reminder:-

to make our Free Zone Days feasible, we do require payment at the time. All of the vets carry card machines and can take payment or you can always phone the office and speak to one of the team.