

# EqWest Equine Veterinary Clinic

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SPRING 2010

## NEWSLETTER

### ONE YEAR ON....



We have now been in our new purpose-built clinic for a whole year. It has been an exciting year for us, being able to see an ever-increasing number of cases at the clinic. Both the horses and their owners have been able to benefit from the excellent facilities we have to offer, not least the large horse trailer parking and turning area.

We have conducted many lameness investigations over the year, and have been able to hospitalise patients in need of intensive care. We have performed many operations and in-depth medical investigations, some by specialist veterinary surgeons from leading referral practices that are happy to visit us to perform the task.

The upstairs studio meeting room has also been a great asset, enabling us to host various clinical meetings, including one for local riding instructors, farriers and most recently clients interested in breeding from their mares.

We also hold weekly Pilates for Riders classes and regular horse massage courses for owners.

### LONG TERM MEDICATION

If your horse has been prescribed long term medication e.g. Bute or Danilon, to comply with veterinary dispensing regulations we must see the horse at least once a year. This can be arranged on one of our area days and could coincide with another routine visit i.e. a vaccination or dental check.

### ARE YOU MAKING THE MOST OF OUR AREA DAYS?

The practice has been divided into four Areas and we routinely visit each of these areas once a week. If we visit you on your Area Day, you will only be charged half of the normal visit fee. Of course we still will visit any part of the practice on any day of the week but normal charges will otherwise apply. Area Day visits must be booked at least 24 hours in advance.

**FOR OUR SPRING  
2010 EQWEST  
WORMING SCHEME -  
SEE PAGE 3**

### SUMMER EYE PROBLEMS



Whilst the occasional periods of hot and sunny weather are a welcome change from the weather of recent years it is proving problematic with some horses. Fly irritation, causing conjunctivitis of one or both eyes is very common during the summer.

Signs to look for are tears running down the horse's face and swelling/ reddening of the inside of the eyelids (conjunctiva). Horses appear uncomfortable and will partially close their eyes to avoid the bright

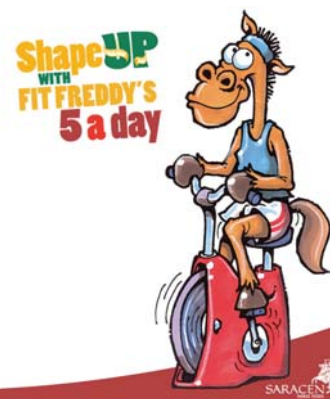
sunshine. Fortunately most cases will respond well to treatment, and turning your horse out wearing a mesh fly mask can often prevent problems.

Other potentially more serious eye conditions can also occur that will need more intensive veterinary input. This is the reason why we are unable to dispense eye medication unless one of the vets has examined the horse. Time is an important factor with eye problems and wherever possible the horse should be examined as a matter of urgency.

**HYALURONIC ACID (HA) INJECTIONS ARE  
AVAILABLE FOR STIFF HORSES PRE SEASON.  
RING THE CLINIC FOR DETAILS.**

**In partnership with Saracen Feeds,  
EqWest is hosting a  
'Fit Freddy' Roadshow  
on Wednesday 21st April 2010  
at 7.00pm at Duchy College,  
Stoke Climsland.**

Freddy's role is to introduce the equestrian market to the Five-a-Day concept of equine welfare and to educate and encourage a healthy approach to nutrition and exercise. The Fit Freddy website can be seen at [www.fitfreddy.org](http://www.fitfreddy.org)



## PREVENTING KICK INJURIES

Social interactions between horses are inherently aggressive as they fight to establish the pecking order in the group. Kick injuries, especially when horses wearing shoes are mixed, are common. Here are some tips to reduce the frequency of kick injuries in horses at grass;

- Keep the groups stable. Don't mix horses between groups if avoidable.
- Larger groups of horses tend to be more socially stable than small groups.
- Horses often form pair bonds. They should be allowed to do so as these keep social stability in the herd.
- Keep the sexes apart. This can have a huge impact on the kicking rate.
- Aim for a large age spread in the group. Horses of similar age, especially if young, are often fighting for higher status in the herd.
- Turn out a newcomer alone first to familiarise itself with the paddock. Then add the other horses to the same paddock.
- Remove the hind shoes, especially from dominant individuals during the introduction phase.
- Don't allow horses to interact across a fence. Use electric fencing to keep them well apart.
- Consider sheeting gates that separate groups of horses to prevent limbs becoming injured in the gate if a horse strikes out.
- Fence off corners where horses may become trapped during a kicking match.



### TIPS FOR WHEN YOU PHONE THE VET IN AN EMERGENCY

- Give your correct number.
- Keep the phone with you.
- Do not use a friend's phone unless you know the number for us to ring you back on.
- Do not walk from the stable to get a signal and then walk back to the stable, otherwise the vet cannot phone you back!
- Do not phone anyone else whilst you are waiting for the vet to ring you.

### RESEARCH

We are currently contributing to two projects;

- **A vaccine trial for Sweet Itch.** This placebo-controlled trial starts late March/early April. Clients have kindly volunteered 40 horses and ponies for the trial. All of these have had sweet itch in previous years.
- **Laminitis project.** We are sending reports on laminitis cases to the Laminitis project at the Animal Health Trust. Many clients of non-affected horses have kindly completed control questionnaires. We have chosen these randomly from our database.

## KILLING OUR HORSES WITH 'KINDNESS'?

Unfortunately, as in the human population, obesity has become a major problem in our horse population. How many of you have or have had a pony with a big cresty neck or ribs that you were rarely able to feel?

The problem we have is that many of our horses and ponies, particularly our native pony breeds are designed to live in some quite challenging conditions when it comes to feed. They have what we term a 'thrifty' gene. This programmes the body to make the absolute best of any available food at times of plenty and lay down fat deposits to see them through the coming hard winter.

The problem is...we have taken them out of this feast and famine environment and keep them in what is essentially a land of plenty all year round. *"So what if my horse or pony is a bit fat, it's always been like that, and anyway, it gets hardly anything to eat."*

The consequences of this high body fat index are frequently serious for the horse or pony. They are at risk from developing a condition called 'Equine Metabolic Syndrome' (EMS). This condition has some parallels with humans developing obesity-linked diabetes.

The main consequence of the condition EMS is that your horse or pony is far more likely to develop laminitis. EMS also affects some Warmbloods that are of normal weight and body condition. So owners of Warmbloods could also benefit from the advice relating to this condition.

### What is the cure?

The cure is largely down to weight reduction and higher levels of regular exercise. These are obviously difficult if not impossible to achieve if your pony has laminitis, so PREVENTION IS BETTER THAN THE CURE. There are some drugs being trialled which may be beneficial, but weight management and exercise remain the most important aspects of controlling and preventing this very serious condition.



### How can we help you?

- Firstly we can offer you advice regarding your horse or pony's body condition. There are measurements that can be taken to help you monitor progress.
- Secondly we can give you professional dietary advice. It is important to manage the reduction in weight carefully as there can be serious side effects if you just 'starve' them to achieve it.
- Thirdly there are blood tests that can be done to measure if your horse or pony has the EMS condition or is close to developing it. These can then be repeated at intervals to monitor if your horse or pony's risk has been sufficiently reduced.

We think the problem of laminitis related to obesity and the distress it causes our horses and owners is so serious that we are launching this spring our **'NAG YOU' WEIGHT WATCHERS CLUB**. This will provide detailed advice and on going support for members.

If you are interested in finding out more about our **'NAG YOU' WEIGHT WATCHERS CLUB** or just want to book an initial advice consultation please email [vets@eqwest.co.uk](mailto:vets@eqwest.co.uk) or phone the clinic.



# EQWEST TARGETED STRATEGIC WORMING SCHEME FOR 2010 GRAZING SEASON

Tel: 01822 613838 Fax: 01822 616122



**Do you want to strategically worm your horse to reduce over-use of wormers?  
Do you want to be cost effective with your worming?  
Do you want to reduce the risk of drug resistance developing?**

In order to adopt a targeted strategic worm control plan for your horse we would suggest that in mid May to early June you have a worm egg count done on each of your horses to see how well your current methods of worm control are working. We can then advise you if use of de-worming drugs is necessary or continue to monitor with repeat worm egg counts.

We blood tested a number of horses in 2009 for **tapeworm** levels and have concluded that twice yearly (July and December) treatment for tapeworms is essential in our area.

**When should I have the first red worm egg count (WEC) done?**

Worm egg counts done too early in the year will give you artificially low levels. Mid May to early June is the best time. The dung sample should only be collected when your horse **has not** been wormed for at least eight weeks (13 weeks if you last used an Equest wormer) otherwise you could have an artificially low WEC. Please seek individual advice from our vets for all horses less than 2 years old, horses on heavily grazed ground or horses in poor condition.

**What to do next** If you wish to use the WEC option then order pack A. If your preferred option is not to do worm egg counts but to worm at fixed intervals during the summer in the traditional way then order pack B

- Pack A - Contains full instructions of how and when to collect samples, sample bags, submission forms, cards clearly labelled with dates for sampling. We will then advise you regarding the appropriate treatment, which in many cases is that **no treatment is required!** Also contains a single Equimax syringe for tapeworm treatment in July (horses over 545kg will require more than one syringe).
- Pack B - A single grazing season worming pack will contain the correct number of wormers to properly treat one adult horse (up to 600 kg) from March through to September. Ponies 12.2hh and under require ½ a pack (a whole pack can be shared with another pony). Includes one tapeworm treatment for up to 545kg (Equimax).

Pack Choice	Contents of pack	Total cost per pack (inc. VAT)
Grazing season - Option A	2 x Worm Egg Counts (mid May & mid August) plus one Equimax syringe (give in July)	£27.71
Grazing season - Option B	2 x Bimectin plus one Equimax syringe	£27.71

**Orders:** Must be received at the clinic **on or before 26th April 2010**. Later orders accepted but will cost 10% extra.

**Collection:** Wormers in pack B will be available from the clinic **on or after 28th April 2010** clearly labelled with the name of horse and the date range in which to administer them.

**Payment:** Please return the reply slip **with FULL payment** or fax/phone your order with a debit or credit card number. Regrettably orders cannot be placed without an accompanying full payment (6 or more packs attract a 2.5 % discount if on a single order with a single payment)

## Wormer Pack Options - REPLY SLIP

Pack Choice	Cost per pack inc. VAT	Number of packs	No. of packs x Cost of pack	Less 2½% Disc (6 or more packs)	Post & Packaging (not insured) £1.50 per pack	Total Payment

Name: ..... Daytime Tel. Number:.....

1st line of address & post code: .....

Horse's names: .....

I wish to pay by debit/credit card: \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_

Expiry Date \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ Valid From \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

Security Number: ..... Issue Number for Switch/debit cards: .....

**Post to: EqWest Equine Clinic, Lamerton, Tavistock PL19 8QA**



**Jane Hyde and Associates Chartered Physiotherapists**

**Tel: 01822 613838**

**Email: [info@physio-tavistock.co.uk](mailto:info@physio-tavistock.co.uk)    [www.physio-tavistock.co.uk](http://www.physio-tavistock.co.uk)**

## **OUR EXPERIENCED PHYSIOTHERAPY TEAM**



**Carmel Marnar      Sarah Curtis      Jane Hyde**  
**Receptionist Georgie Lane**

**Would you like to help your horse enjoy your summer of riding, pain free and in a more harmonious partnership? We can check for any asymmetries in your horse or yourself.**

Just by completing simple exercises daily, you can improve your core stability, flexibility, body awareness and stamina which in turn will improve the control of your aids to your horse. We are able to assess and treat niggly back or neck problems, or include you in one of our special Pilates classes designed to benefit horse riders, if you are keen to improve your riding posture and strength, ring Jane Hyde at the Clinic for a chat.

### **Be ready to spring into action this year**

Gardening and 'poo picking' are two common reasons people come to see us each year for physiotherapy treatment for their back and knee pain. We have listed a few general guidelines that may help.

### **Top tips for gardening and poo picking!**

- Get fit for gardening! Improving your general flexibility and core strength particularly of your knees, back and neck, will pay dividends.
- Our weekly Pilates classes help to strengthen and stretch your muscles ready to help with kneeling, digging and lifting. NB Pilates is not a quick fix. After the first 10 sessions you will **feel** a difference. After the next 10 sessions, you will notice a difference and after the next 10 sessions, **other people will notice** a difference.

## **ARE YOU RIDER FIT TO GET THE BEST OUT OF YOUR HORSE?**

It is part of our responsibility to our horse to maintain our own level of fitness. Our horses are totally in tune with every body movement we make. The more body control we have, the better.

Think of a rucksack on your back, unevenly packed and off to one side. Initially this would be OK, until you've worn it for an hour or more. It would then become uncomfortable and your muscles would ache from trying to maintain you in an upright and symmetrical position. Imagine if we are doing this on a daily basis to our horse?

If you have a back problem, you will have difficulty in sitting symmetrically, particularly when your muscles become tired. You may even struggle to keep your stirrups at an even length. If you are unfit, your muscles become fatigued more quickly, so you are less able to help your horse carry your weight.

- Plan your gardening sessions, vary your tasks, break up your digging time into shorter periods, mix in with weeding etc (drinking tea!)
- Pace your gardening sessions (even when the weather is good, don't spend hours digging on the first sunny day).
- When carrying, lift lighter loads and make more trips. Carry two half full buckets, one in each hand rather than one full one.
- Good back sense - bend your knees rather than your back when possible, don't stay in one position for too long.
- If you are kneeling, invest in some good knee pads or a kneeler stool, which can either be sat on or knelt on.
- Potting plants – either sitting or standing with appropriate height work surface, so that you are not bending.
- Either as prevention or as an aid, wearing appropriate joint supports for knees and back can help a lot (contact the Physiotherapy Clinic).
- At the end of the day, beware of the chair that you relax in. Your hips should be higher than your knees with a cushion in the small of your back.
- If you are really achy, place an ice pack on the offending ache for up to 15 minutes, followed by a heat pack.
- If you are still aching after all that, call us!