



Welcome to the Scott Dunn's Equine Clinic Newsletter

WINTER FEEDING

With the onset of winter, feeding is paramount to maintain condition, energy and intestinal health. Without the high nutritional content of summer grass, replacement energy in the form of hard food (concentrates) and adequate fibre is essential. Feeding, as always, must reflect the current work and management of the horse or pony. Many horses and ponies work less during the winter due to shorter days and lack of competition opportunity. Others, such as hunters and team chasers have an increased workload.

Reduced exercise should lead to a reduction in protein and energy intake whilst ensuring adequate roughage (e.g. hay) is always available and condition is maintained.

Reduction in exercise, reduced turnout and limited access to feed, especially roughage, predisposes horses to impacted colic – the most common winter colic suffered by horses. Horses tend to drink less water when the weather is cold, adding to the risk of

impaction, and a significant worm burden affecting blood supply to the large intestine may also be implicated.

To avoid impaction ensure an adequate water intake by adding salt to the food. Ad lib access to hay and regular exercise play a vital role. If horses eat their straw bed, consider changing the type of bedding to shavings or paper. Water should be available at all times, both in the stable and in the paddock. During freezing weather ensure water is accessible – place wood in the water troughs to prevent freezing or regularly break the ice.

Older horses commonly suffer from dental problems and require special attention. Easily chewed and digested veteran mixes, Alpha A and steamed hay or horsage may be appropriate.

A pre-winter dental check/evaluation would be a sensible precaution for veterans.

Due to the warmth of recent winters, a proficient winter worming programme should be maintained.

If you are unsure about your worming regime, please contact the surgery and request our recommended worming programme.

Horses with restricted access to pasture during the winter carry an increased risk of gastric ulceration. Horses which do not thrive, undergo behavioural changes or show discomfort during or soon after feeding should trigger an investigation. A blood sample and/or a gastroscopic examination may be required to identify the problem.

This can be performed at Straight Mile Farm by appointment.



END OF SEASON LAMENESS

After a long season, many horses with subtle joint or tendon pain begin to show lameness. The common approach is to give them the winter off work and bring them back into work in the spring. Whilst this may suit your circumstances it isn't always the best approach.

We see more lame horses in the spring than any other time of the year because owners have brought their horses back into work and realised that he/she is still lame! If your horse is not 100% at the moment, then now is the time to have the lameness investigated so that we have the best chance of correcting it before the new season.

TAPEWORM TREATMENT

The best time to dose for tapeworm is the autumn. This is because tapeworm eggs are carried by a small mite which lives on the pasture, known as an oribatid forage mite. These mites are generally killed off after the first frost and the best treatments to use are those which contain praziquantel: Equitape, Equimax or Eqvalan duo. Double dose pyrantel (Stogid -P or Pyratape) will also kill the tapeworms but is slightly less effective.

SKIN PROBLEMS

Wet muddy conditions predispose horses to mud fever, cracked heels and rainscald. Typically this is an infection caused by a bacteria which is part of the normal skin flora. As a result of being constantly wet or injured the protective mechanism of the skin is breached and the infection becomes established. Horses in poor condition with reduced fat and oil in the skin are more prone to these conditions. These bacteria are usually easily eradicated. Keep legs clean and dry, remove excessive hair, remove any scabs and apply antibiotic cream. Constant washing of the legs is detrimental. If it is necessary to wash off mud etc, ensure the legs are thoroughly dried.

Preventative measures include maintaining the horse's condition, rugging them in wet and inclement weather, clipping off excessive hair and applying waterproofing barrier creams such as udder cream or hoof care. **BEWARE** of applying astringent creams or potions. The skin is very sensitive and easily damaged, encouraging infection to become established.

DIGITAL X-RAYING

Scott Dunn Equine is pleased to announce it's acquisition of a SECOND EKLIN DR digital radiography system to support our powerful in house FUGI CR system.

This development reflects our commitment to provide state of the art diagnostics and imaging to enhance our diagnostic capability, improving the welfare of horses under our care.

Digital radiography delivers superior images giving us high definition radiographs which can be manipulated to highlight and enlarge areas of concern. The quality of these images allows bone structure to be evaluated and subtle radiographic changes to be studied in detail.

Digital systems allow storage of images on DVD, CD or in rapid storage systems. Images can be printed off, displayed on film and sent to relevant bodies. The capacity also exists to transmit images electronically via e-mail to veterinary orthopaedic experts for a rapid specialist opinion.

The EKLIN system is portable, allowing high quality digital x-rays to be obtained at the point of examination. For long distance pre-purchase examinations it allows the radiographs of choice to be obtained immediately following clinical examination. This overcomes problems with radiographs being posted some days later from local practices, thus delaying the purchase decision. In cases of injury it allows for rapid informed decisions giving to immediate and appropriate treatment.

ANAESTHESIA

Anaesthesia is one of the most critical interferences your horse may be subjected to, with a reported fatality rate of 1 in 100. At Scott Dunns our anaesthesia success is far higher than this due to our superior inhalation anaesthetic (desflorane) which is the envy of our colleagues and the local hospitals alike!! Safety is further enhanced by a state of the art anaesthetic machine with automatic forced ventilation and sensitive monitoring equipment to ensure your horse is closely monitored throughout the procedure.

Most importantly however, we have a dedicated anaesthetist who is a fully qualified **ADVANCED** equine anaesthetist. Stuart Wallis MRCVS has achieved this distinction and his knowledge of anaesthesia ensures optimum safety and the highest standards of care for your horse during surgical procedures.

Stuart has also assumed the role of yard vet from James earlier on in the year. James A/I has been such a success this year that he needed to dedicate more time to this. Therefore, Stuart Wallis assumed this role.

CLIPPING

This is one of the most dangerous occupations performed by horse owners.

Although fidgety horses may respond to ACP tablets or Sedalin paste, **these are NOT SUITABLE for horses who object to being clipped.**

If your horse is not easy to clip, please ask for help and we will ensure adequate sedation is administered to allow you to clip quickly, safely and neatly!

ELLEN EAVES

Ellen has recently joined the vet team and graduated at Liverpool University some years ago. She has been working full time in an equine and large animal practice in Worcestershire where she developed a wide range of skills and experience.

She has her own horse and is a keen triathlon competitor. She is a sound equine practitioner and will strengthen our ambulatory team.

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Opening Hours - 8.30 am to 18.00pm Monday to Friday,
Saturday 8.30am to 12 noon

If there are any topics that you would like covered in the subsequent newsletters, please contact the reception staff, so that we can target areas of interest more accurately.

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