



Welcome to the Scott Dunn's Equine Clinic Newsletter

LICE

As the heavy winter wears on, we have been seeing an increasing numbers of horses and ponies infested with lice. The worst infestations are usually in the young, the old, or the debilitated, but this year we have been seeing them in almost any animals with thick coats. Signs include hair loss, itchiness, scratching and biting, or generally seeming miserable. Infection is by direct contact with other infected animals, but lice can live in the environment for several days, and the eggs laid on the hairs can survive much longer.

Prevention can be achieved by using over-the-counter louse powders, but once a horse is infected, louse powders are pretty ineffective. A permethrin-based spray or wipe-on product such as Coopers, Switch or Barricade are quite good, but obviously the practicalities of wetting the hairs thoroughly in the cold weather makes topical treatment less than ideal. The most effective treatment is an injectable product, which although not licensed for use in horses, is very regularly and safely used throughout the equine world, but must be administered by a vet. To thoroughly banish the lice infestation, the accepted treatment regime is for an injection every 2 weeks for 3 treatments, in

combination with thorough cleaning and disinfection of all rugs and bedding. It is important to repeat the injections in order to kill off any newly hatching lice in the subsequent weeks, as the eggs are very firmly attached to hairs, and are not affected by the injection. Please call to speak to a vet for further advice if you think your horse may be affected.



EVENING VETERINARY TALKS

The first of this years evening talks will be on wound management, presented by Simon Knapp. The venue will be Neville Hall, Milley Road, Waltham St Lawrence on Friday 26th March at 7pm. Please contact reception to book your seat for what promises to be a fascinating evening. Places are free of charge but we welcome any donations towards Simon's sponsored ride in July in aid of Help for Heroes.

Veterinary information evenings will be held throughout the year covering a range of interesting topics including colic, laminitis,

grassland management and many others. The presentations are free of charge and refreshments are provided. We will be posting our clients details of each talk in advance but please feel free to telephone the practice should you require any information in the meantime. We look forward to seeing you soon.

Special Offers

Microchips - Due to a great deal of demand last year, we are once again offering microchips at a reduced cost of £18.15 during March, April and May (usual price £33.04)

Vaccinations - Between 1st March and 31st May, all vaccines will be subject to a 10% discount. This includes flu, tetanus, equine herpes virus and any combination vaccine of these.

Routine Blood Profiles - During March and April, all routine in-house blood profiles (biochemistry and haematology) will be reduced to £43.11 – a saving of 20%. You may find this useful as a pre competition general health screen or if your horse is elderly, on long term medication or has lost condition through the winter.

MUD FEVER



Mud fever is neither the direct result of mud nor a fever. It is a dermatitis, or skin infection, that occurs in the heels and pasterns of horses. When found on the back, withers or flanks it is known as rainscauld.

Mud fever is caused by a bacteria which is a normal inhabitant of healthy skin. If the skin becomes damaged or the protective waterproofing layers over the skin are breached, the organism is able to invade and produce infection. Constant wet conditions associated with trauma producing skin damage results in cracked heels and infection. Rug rubs and areas of water run off are also prone to infection. The warm moist conditions found under long hair on the skin folds behind the pastern are ideal conditions for bacterial infection. A horse's skin is very sensitive and must be respected.

What can be done?

1. Dry the legs thoroughly with disposable towels, especially horses with significant feather. Avoid rubbing vigorously with towels as this may damage the skin increasing the risk of infection. Wet dirty towels are a haven for bacteria. Brush off mud when it is dry and examine the skin carefully. If scabs or inflamed reddened areas are present, apply an

antiseptic barrier cream such as Sudocrem. Ensure scabs are removed before applying the cream.

2. Keep all bedding clean, fresh and dry.

3. Horses with mud fever do not require box rest. They can be exercised in a ménage, hacked out on roads or loose schooled in a small paddock or school. Movement helps circulation and reduces swelling.

4. Apply barrier creams to susceptible areas. Udder creams such as Cetriad, Sudocrem, Dermagel or Avon anti aging cream are preferable – avoid Vaseline. The thick oily nature of Vaseline prevents oxygen reaching the skin and can cause burns and tissue loss.

5. If infection or cracked heels are present, clip away excess hair. Once present, infection thrives under feathers and is difficult to treat. However attached you are to your horses feather, in the presence of infection, cut it off!!

6. To treat the condition successfully, all scabs must be removed. The scab acts as a very effective barrier to topical treatment. Kaolin poultice wrapped with cling film for 24 hours will effectively remove resistant scabs. Avoid excess washing of the legs – this should only be necessary if there is significant dirt present. If you must wash the legs, dry them thoroughly. Areas where scabs have been removed will look raw and may ooze serum. Apply a suitable cream to these areas - do not use purple spray or wound powder.

7. Make us your first call. Mud fever should not be under-estimated. If treated early and appropriately it can be rapidly controlled and cured resulting in a sound horse and no loss of work.

If ignored, these infections can become deep seated and resistant to treatment.

We are often presented with lame horses suffering from severe infection which has been treated with numerous concoctions, many of which would have made things worse. Ask for help early – we have specially formulated mud fever creams which can cure your horse quickly, ensuring a rapid return to work and minimal cost. **See our website for a list of fact sheets with more information.**



On 10th July 2010, our Clinical Director Simon Knapp will be taking part in the largest sponsored ride ever, held in aid of Help for Heroes. Over 2000 horses will start at Ascot Racecourse, follow a route around the beautiful Windsor Great Park and finish off with the unique experience of riding past the winning post on the hallowed turf of Ascot Racecourse. Simon will be completing the five mile event riding one of Her Majesty's horses. Please join us in supporting Simon and if you would like to sponsor him to raise money for this worthy cause, donations can be made by visiting Simon's fundraising web page www.justgiving.com/Simonknapp.

If you would like any further details regarding the event and sponsorship, please telephone the practice.

PLEASE WELCOME



We would like to introduce our new senior veterinary surgeon, **Mark Cubberley**, who will be joining our team at the end of March. Mark qualified from the Royal Veterinary College of London in 1992 and brings with him a wealth of experience and knowledge, including the Certificate in Equine Internal Medicine. In 2003, Mark was appointed by the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons as an examiner for the Certificate in Equine Internal Medicine and became a senior examiner in 2006. As well as working with horses, he is a keen rider and competes in several disciplines. We are privileged to be joined by Mark and with the rest of the team, we look forward to 2010.

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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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