

## Christmas and New Year opening hours

**Friday 24th December**  
Normal opening hours

**Saturday 25th December**  
Emergency cover only

**Sunday 26th December**  
Emergency cover only

**Monday 27th December**  
Emergency cover only

**Tuesday 28th December**  
Emergency cover only

**Wednesday 29th December to Friday 31st December**  
Normal opening hours

**Saturday 1st January**  
Emergency cover only

**Sunday 2nd January**  
Emergency cover only

**Monday 3rd January**  
Emergency cover only

**Tuesday 4th January**  
Resume normal opening hours

## Horse & Hound Vet of the Year

We are proud to announce that our very own Elizabeth Frew has been short listed for Horse & Hound Vet of the Year.

The winner will be announced at a ceremony at Cheltenham racecourse on 1 December.



## Christmas wishes

Each year, in place of sending Christmas cards, we choose to donate to a charity instead. This year, we have decided to donate to the Isle of Wight Donkey Sanctuary and adopt 'Belle-Helene' the donkey. The IOW Donkey Sanctuary is currently home to 113 donkeys, 1 mule and 22 ponies, all of whom are rescued or abandoned and the charity gives them a forever home.

Along with re-homing donkeys, the charity acts as an education centre educating children, students, apprentices and volunteers; it is a visitor attraction where people can meet the donkeys, and the charity also allows the donkeys to take part in donkey therapy programmes across the IOW, where they work with Alzheimer patients, stroke patients and patients of a variety of needs.



'Belle-Helene'

## Happy maternity leave to Becky and a warm welcome to Helena!

We would like to wish our practice Manager, Becky, a very happy and healthy maternity leave and wish her all the best for the arrival of her little one. We would like to thank Becky for all she has done for the practice over the past 6 years, she has provided so much support to the whole team and will be deeply missed.

Helena will be taking over as Practice Manager in Becky's absence and we would like to warmly welcome Helena to the KB team.

Helena previously worked in customer service for several years before becoming a receptionist and administrator at a busy equine only ambulatory practice. Helena has worked in veterinary practice for just under four years and has successfully completed her Veterinary Practice Administrative Certificate during this time. She also has considerable experience of the complex admin required for AI and export certificates!



Outside of work Helena events her Connemara pony, Travis, at BE grassroots level, and is looking forward to getting him out competing again next season. Helena is new to Hampshire so will also be trying to explore and get to know the area a bit more!

# Caring for your horse at Christmas



Christmas can be a very busy time of year and so it is wise to plan ahead. With this in mind, we have put together some tips and advice on caring for your horse at Christmas.

## Maintain a normal routine over the festive period

Horses need to be in a routine as sudden changes can increase the risk of colic. During this time of year, there may be times when a horse's exercise and diet are often changed. Any management changes should be introduced slowly to ensure your horse stays healthy and happy.

## Enjoy the festive period with your horse

- Get some fresh air and exercise whilst enjoying some lovely hacks with your horse
- Learn a new skill with your horse, such as clicker training
- De-stress yourself and your horse by spending some quality time grooming. Grooming your horse can be relaxing and therapeutic for the both of you
- Head to the beach with your horse and blow away those winter blues



## Are you giving your horse a Christmas holiday?

Here are some tips to keep your horse happy and healthy whilst they are having some time off:

- Keeping your horse out to grass 24/7 can help with their physical and mental health and has been found to reduce the risk of behavioural problems which are often associated with stabled horses
- Water troughs/drinkers can freeze over and prevent horses from drinking enough, which can lead to complications such as impaction colics. Drinkable water must be available at all times, and 'soup' mashes can help to increase your horse's water intake
- Continue to poo pick regularly to help reduce worm burden on the pasture
- Having routine farrier care is essential to maintain healthy feet and ensure you continue to regularly pick your horse's feet out
- Feed according to the amount of exercise your horse is doing





## Do you have enough of your horse's repeat medication to last the festive period?

As the Christmas holidays are upon us, we would like to give our clients plenty of notice regarding ordering repeat medication for their horses. Please don't forget to order enough medication to last your horse through the festive season, as soon as possible.

We cannot guarantee the post so we advise you to collect your medication from the practice, to make sure you don't run out over the holidays.

Please allow us 48 hours for authorisation by a veterinary surgeon and to process and post your prescription request.

## Are you going away for the festive period?

Prior to going away, please call us to discuss who has authority to act on your behalf, whilst you are away. This can save valuable time that could save your horse's life.

Ensure you have someone you can trust (whilst you are away) to make decisions about your horse and discuss with them your emergency plan options and insurance information etc. You can then go away knowing your horse is covered.

## Treating your horse over the festive period

We all love to spoil ourselves over the festive period but we urge you not to indulge your horse.

Whilst horses enjoy a good old fashioned apple or carrot as a special treat, make sure you give them in moderation.

In large quantities, even a healthy snack can become unhealthy, adding extra calories that most horses do not need.

## Sky lanterns – warning

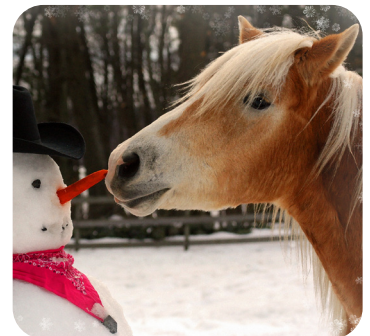
Please spare a thought for horses and other animals whilst celebrating the festive period. Sky lanterns are becoming increasingly popular at times of celebrations. Whilst they look beautiful floating in the sky, please consider the after effects. When they land they can cause animals horrific injuries and even death.

Our advice to horse owners is to be extra vigilant and regularly check your horse's paddock and hedges, plus try to discourage people from using the lanterns.

## Christmas hazards

Did you know holly leaves and berries and mistletoe are toxic to horses? Whilst horses tend to not be interested in these plants/berries, they may accidentally ingest them. Therefore, it is best to avoid horses from grazing anywhere near them.

If you are decorating your stables with festive lights and tinsel etc, ensure they are kept out of reach from horses. Not only will some horses try and eat them, the lights could be a fire hazard if not inspected properly.



## Equine Odontoclastic Tooth Resorption and Hypercementosis (EOTRH)

EOTRH is a dental disease affecting aged horses that has only been described more recently. The disease is characterised by tooth resorption and destruction, cemental deposition and often periodontal disease.

The disease mainly affects the incisors and canine teeth but can affect the cheek teeth. It is typically seen in horses greater than 15 years of age. The disease is painful, but many horses may not show clinical signs if the changes are mild.

The cause of EOTRH is not fully understood, although a few theories have been described including: an immune mediated syndrome, the effect of stresses and strains on the equine teeth and micro-organism involvement.

**Diagnosis** is based on the age of the horse, clinical signs and clinical exam findings as well as radiographic findings.

### Clinical signs can include:

- Pain
- Difficulty chewing
- Quidding (dropping food)
- Hypersalivation
- Halitosis (smelly breath)
- Biting problems
- Head shaking
- Periodic inappetence
- Weight loss

However, the disease is often asymptomatic (no clinical signs seen) even when a diagnosis is made with relatively advanced disease.

Oral examination of the mouth can show signs such as: gingival inflammation (inflammation of the gum), oedema (swelling), recession of the gums (see figures 1 & 2), calculus build up around the teeth, feed accumulation and possible draining tracts around the teeth.

Advanced changes include bulbous enlargement of the dental structures (see figures 1&2), tooth mobility and periodontal disease and eventually potential tooth fracture or loss.

Horses with EOTRH often resent the gag being placed when performing an oral examination as the bit plates put pressure on the incisor teeth and tooth roots.

Radiographs (see figure 3) are useful as early changes tend to occur below the gumline, so are not always visible on examination. Radiography allows the extent of the disease to be shown and allows a definitive diagnosis to be reached to enable a decision to be made with regards to treatment.

Radiographs are easily performed on site at the yard. To radiograph the incisors and canines, intra-oral radiographs need be taken. This involves sedating your horse and using a head stand, to enable the xray plate to be placed between their teeth for images to be taken.

### Management:

Unfortunately, there is no specific treatment for this disease. In cases where disease is advanced and extremely painful, the only option is to extract those teeth involved. Whilst it seems like a drastic option, horses do very well with no incisors and often once they are removed, owners notice a dramatic improvement in their horse's demeanour, comfort and quality of life.

If changes are mild, some horses can be managed symptomatically for many years before extraction is needed. This may include pain medication, anti-biotics, dental care e.g tooth brushing to remove trapped food.



Figure 1: Incisors of a 19 year old warmblood with EOTRH. There is gingival recession of the upper middle and corner incisors (arrows).



Figure 2: Incisors of a 19 year old warmblood with EOTRH. There is marked gingival recession of the upper corner and middle incisor with alveolar bone loss and hypercementosis (red arrow), particularly of the corner incisor. There is calculus build up around the gingival margin of the upper middle incisor (blue arrow).



Figure 3: Intra-oral radiograph of the upper incisors of the same horse in figures 1 & 2. Radiographs show evidence of marked hypercementosis seen as the bulbous tooth roots (arrow). There is evidence of tooth root resorption, particularly on the upper corner incisor and radiolucency around the tooth roots of some of the teeth.