



PROJECT WORMS:

Working together to tackle anthelmintic resistance

Project Worms has been launched to bring vets and horse owners together to tackle resistance to wormers. The project is a collaboration between a group of specialised equine vets and has gained approval from the RCVS Ethics Committee.

The first stage of the project is aimed at horse owners/ keepers and stud owners/ managers and consists of a short online questionnaire about your current worming management. All responses are anonymous but there is the option to be entered into a draw to win £100 in Love to Shop vouchers. The information from the survey will help us help horse owners and keepers improve worming practices in future.

For more information please visit the webpage below and follow the links to the questionnaires:

vetpartners.co.uk/project-worms-working-together-to-tackle-anthelmintic-resistance



WHAT 3 WORDS

Our 3 words are:
///protrude.alpha.convinced

What are yours?



The What3Words app is commonly used by the emergency services and we have started using it to enable us to get a precise location of your horse or pony. This app is particularly helpful when multiple addresses share the same postcode as the 3 words are specific to an area of 3m2.

If you are able to, please download the app and provide us with the What3Words for your horse's location (ideally at the front gate of the property) next time you contact us for an appointment.

We hope that this system will make it easier to find all yards especially for out of hours calls and emergencies when it may not be your usual vet in the practice attending the call.

If you're unfamiliar with the app check out our tutorial video on our Facebook page.

EXTRACORPOREAL SHOCK WAVE THERAPY

What is it

Extracorporeal Shock Wave Therapy is a non-invasive treatment, used widely in the treatment of many orthopaedic conditions including Proximal Suspensory Desmitis, Annular Ligament Desmitis and sacroiliac and back pain. Our machine is fully portable allowing treatment to be carried out at your yard.

How does it work?

Our equine specific machine is fitted with a focal probe which generates high-intensity pressure waves that are directed towards the damaged structure. Focal shockwave is used in preference to widely used radial shockwave, because focused waves can be directed at a particular point and can penetrate deeper into the soft tissue. Shockwave is used to help stimulate healing and the pressure waves have been shown to help generate the formation of new blood vessels, improve the horse's natural repair mechanisms, reduce inflammation and provide almost instant pain relief.



Visit our website to find out more: kingsbountyequine.co.uk

SPRING INTO FITNESS - CROSS TRAINING IN HORSES

What is cross training?

Top human athletes use cross training as part of their fitness regimes to ensure they work their whole body instead of just the core set of muscles that they use for their usual sport.

If a top cyclist only exercised on a bike then the body would become adapted to the repetitive movements of cycling resulting in over-use of some joints, muscle groups, tendons and ligaments and vast under use of others.

By adding in other forms of exercise such as running, circuit classes, yoga or swimming, athletes are able to develop a well rounded, stronger body overall.



What are the benefits of cross training?

In humans many benefits of cross training are recognised including helping injury prevention. A more varied exercise regime can also help to build strength, endurance and flexibility in humans.

The same can be said for horses! Mixing up your usual training routine with your horse is important and can benefit both horse and rider. You can add in hacking, roadwork, pole work or even ground work to your horse's usual training programme to help improve fitness, musculoskeletal strength, co-ordination and produce a well rounded horse with a better attitude to work.

Building up fitness:

If your horse has had some time off this winter, make sure that work is reintroduced gradually to improve your horse's strength and fitness. It's also a good idea to get your saddle checked especially if your horse has changed shape over the winter months.



SPRING AWARENESS - GAS COLIC

Colic is a year round risk for horses however changes in management can predispose your horse to certain types of colic.

Gas and spasmodic colics are particularly common during the spring months when horses are turned out after over-winter stabling.

Horses are hindgut fermenters and use their large intestines for digestion of a high fibre diet. In some instances where horses have access to luscious spring grass with a high nutritional value, their digestive system can become overloaded and rapid fermentation within the hindgut can produce excess gas and result in abdominal discomfort and colic.

If your horse has been stabled throughout the winter months and you are now planning to increase turnout you can help reduce the risk of colic by:

- Introduce turnout gradually - start with a couple of hours each day building up to all day/ night turnout
- Avoid sudden turnout on to luscious spring grass. Try strip grazing or start turnout in fields that have been grazed over winter
- If there are sudden frosts or cold spells overnight, your horse may drink less which can increase the risk of colic. In colder weather you can help encourage water intake by offering damp feeds or soaked hay in the field
- Check if your horse is up to date with worming management. See the section on spring worming for advice on what you should be doing at this time of year
- Check that your horse is up to date with dental examinations



SPRING WORMING MANAGEMENT

Anthelmintics are a class of medications used to treat parasitic worms. There are multiple different active ingredients in the wormers available for use in horses, with different ones being more effective against different worms.

Due to historical overuse of wormers in horses, there are high rates of resistance to many of the active ingredients meaning that these may be ineffective in treating your horse. Over time the increasing resistance may result in higher incidences of worm related disease in horses. There are no new classes of wormer being developed for horses so we must protect those that we currently have.

How can you help?

Within the equine industry we must move away from routine worming of all horses every 3 months. Targeted worming is the best way for us to ensure anthelmintics are only used when required and will help reduce resistance to wormers. By performing faecal worm egg counts we can measure the worm burden of your horse and then advise you if treatment is necessary. It is advised to carry out between 2 and 4 faecal worm egg counts a year to monitor worm burden.



What about tapeworm?

Tapeworm eggs are not detected on a faecal sample. At home saliva test kits can be purchased online (for example from Equisal) and carried out by you at home to test your horse's tapeworm burden. We advise testing for tapeworm if your horse has not required worming over the last 12 months due to low worm egg counts or if you have not used a worming product against tapeworm in the last 12 months. Young horses are more susceptible to disease from tapeworm so may require more frequent testing and treatment.

What should be done in Spring?

We advise submitting a faecal sample for a worm egg count in March or April (at least 13 weeks after you last gave a wormer).

Carry out an at home saliva test for tapeworm if you haven't treated for tapeworm in the last 12 months.

If you would like help planning a targeted worming programme for your horse or for a yard then please speak to us for more information.

A guide to worming can also be found on our website under the Clinical Information tab.

CHECKING YOUR HORSE'S EYES



Ocular trauma and damage are unfortunately a common occurrence in horses. Here are a few tips on how to check over your horse's eyes.

Facts about horse eyes:

- Horses are prey animals and so their eyes are located on the side of their head giving them an extremely wide field of view
- A horse's horizontal field of vision is between 340-350 degrees, compared to an average of 120 degrees in a human
- Horses, like dogs and cats, have a third eyelid called the nictitating membrane
- The third eyelid helps to distribute tear film across the surface of the eye and also helps to protect the surface of the eye

Abnormalities to note - when checking your horse make sure to check each eye for any changes or abnormalities:

- Discharge: some horses will occasionally have clear watery discharge, however thick, mucoid, or coloured discharge (eg white, yellow, green) is abnormal
- Squinting: (also known as blepharospasm) if your horse's eye is partially or fully closed this may indicate discomfort or the presence of a foreign body
- Cloudiness: Look at the surface of the eye and note if there any change. A normal cornea appears smooth, clear and shiny. Changes you may notice include blue, yellow or white haze over the surface of the eye or roughening of the surface of the cornea.
- Eyelid swelling: Look at the soft tissue around the eye, any new swelling, heat or pain may indicate trauma
- Reddening of the conjunctiva around the eye

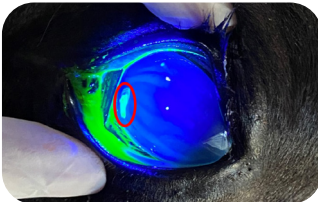
CHECKING YOUR HORSE'S EYES

Commonly seen problems:

- **Corneal ulceration:** Ulceration to the cornea can occur following even the mildest trauma to the eye for example knocking the eye in the field or stable
- **Conjunctivitis:** This is inflammation of the conjunctiva and usually occurs due to irritation from dust or allergens
- **Uveitis:** This is inflammation of the uvea (one of the layers within the eye). Most commonly uveitis will occur secondarily to another eye problem eg trauma or a corneal ulcer
- **Cataracts:** These are opacities in the lens or lens capsule within the eye which affects light passage through the eye and hence affects vision. There are multiple different types of cataracts including congenital cataracts, senile cataracts and traumatic cataracts.
- **Ocular trauma:** When wounds around the eye occur it is always advisable for a thorough check of the eye to rule out any damage to the eye itself.

Veterinary Ophthalmic Examination: if your horse requires a visit due to an ophthalmic issue, the following procedures may be carried out:

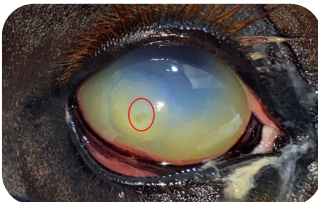
- Examination using an ophthalmoscope
- Assessment of the cranial nerves to test sight, response to light and movement of the eyelids
- Application of fluorescein dye to evaluate the surface of the cornea and test for corneal ulcers
- Use of local anaesthetic blocks to facilitate examination
- Swabs of the surface of the cornea or of the conjunctiva for cytology



This horse has a small area of ulceration on the surface of the cornea (shown by the green dye, circled in red). The eye is being viewed under blue uv light as it provides better definition of the areas that uptake the dye.



This horse is recovering from a corneal ulcer. The body produces new blood vessels in the affected area to assist with healing. The new blood vessels can be seen along the top boarder of the eye.



This horse has a corneal ulcer that has resulted in a severe infection of the eye. There is thick yellow discharge from the eye, reddening of the conjunctiva and the eye has become cloudy yellow indicating infection. The ulcer can be seen without dye (circled in red).



This horse has a cataract that occurred following trauma to the eye. Cloudy white opacities can be seen within the lens. This horse had reduced vision in this eye.

If you have any concerns about your horse's eyes then it is always advisable to contact your vet to arrange a visit.