

Autumn 2024

In this issue:

- Equine Colic
- Sheep Quarantine Protocol
- Vitamin D in Camelids
- Bluetongue update

Equine Clinics NO VISIT FEE!

We are now offering regular clinics next door at **Dodderhill Equestrian Centre** for routine dentals, vaccinations, blood sampling, weighing and gastroscopy.

Next clinics:

29th October

26th November

Gastroscopy on clinic days at Dodderhill EC will be at a reduced price of £200 (including sedation).

Please phone the office
01905 773262
to book a space



REMINDER:

Pen&Strep is now a fridge item with a longer shelf life!

DON'T FORGET TO ORDER CALF PNEUMONIA VACCINES BEFORE THE AUTUMN/WINTER/HOUSING RISK PERIOD!

Equine Colic

A big concern for many horse owners is colic. Although there are different types of colic and different levels of severity it is always important to get a vet to check it out. If you notice any of the following symptoms, don't wait for things to worsen before calling— Remember— horses can be very stoic!

Clinical signs include:

- Flank watching
- Burping
- Agitation and restlessness
- Pawing at the ground
- Sweating
- Rolling
- Reduced droppings over 24hrs
- Reduced interest in feed



Whilst you are waiting for us, ensure your horse has access to water and is in a place where they can safely get up and down, if necessary. Walking your horse can help distract them from discomfort - but don't feel you have to force them to exercise. Sometimes putting a bit in their mouth can also increase gut motility and be a distraction, so it may be worth a try!

Hospital vs Home?

- ⇒ Why do we refer some colics to a hospital for further evaluation and treatment? Around 1 in 5 of horses we see with colic have severe symptoms which may indicate that a part of their gut has become trapped or twisted. These cases may not react to pain relief as we would expect, therefore surgery may be required to correct what has happened internally.
- ⇒ In other cases, we may have had repeated episodes of mild colic symptoms. The horse may benefit from IV fluids overnight, medical management and being monitored carefully, especially if this is not possible at home.
- ⇒ We know that costs are not the first priority when considering referring your horse for colic, but it is worth thinking about so you have a plan in place. The average UK cost of a horse undergoing colic surgery is £6437. Medical management of colic at a hospital can vary from £500 to £3000 depending on the duration and intensity of their stay. Most hospitals request a £1000 deposit on arrival.
- ⇒ What is the horse's chance of return to work? Between 62-77% of surgical colics survive to discharge and around 60% of these patients have returned to work at 12 months, many at the same level or higher than before.
- ⇒ Every colic case is different and an appropriate treatment plan for one horse doesn't always work well for another one.

Top tips for reducing your colic risk all year round:

- Encourage drinking and ensure clean water is always available. If you have a horse that is reluctant to drink, add water to feeds or soak hay to increase their fluid intake. There are several 'recovery mashes' available which can also help.
- Changes to diet and/or management should be done slowly over 10-14 days. If you keep your horse in overnight during the winter, start by keeping them in for a few hours each evening to help acclimatise their digestive system.
- Mix new and old hay together. Colic is more likely in the 2 weeks following a forage change so try to make the change as gradual as possible.
- Get teeth checked yearly!
- Keep on top of worm management: get a faecal worm egg count every 3 months during the grazing season.

SCOPS Sheep Quarantine Protocol

Following arrival onto farm, individuals should be held in isolation (no nose to nose touching) for at least 28 days. During this period they should be monitored for lameness, diarrhoea, wool loss and itching and be vaccinated according to flock's protocol.

- Step 1:** Treat all sheep brought onto the farm with anthelmintics likely to remove all worms – both resistant and susceptible worms (ie Zolvix). Drench with a wormer from either the orange or purple group + Inject with moxidectin 1% (for sheep scab) + Flukicide (for liver fluke)
- Step 2:** **Holding on Yard-** Hold sheep OFF pasture for 24-48 hours, until any worm eggs present in the gut have passed out in the faeces.
- Step 3:** **Turnout to dirty (contaminated) pasture-** Sheep should then be turned out to previously grazed pasture to dilute any resistance egg output.

Vitamin D Supplementation in Camelids

South American alpacas and llamas require vitamin D during the winter months in the UK due to the short days and low sunlight. Vitamin D is acquired through direct sunlight and diet, which is necessary for calcium and phosphorous absorption to help with normal bone regulation and formation. Camelids can develop bone diseases, such as rickets and long bone malformation, if they are deficient. Clinical signs can vary from subtle to severe, which include gait changes, weight shifting, lameness, bunny hop gait, changes in limb angulation and eventually reluctance to stand. These events are more severe in young camelids with developing bones. Crias born to a vitamin D deficient dam are at a higher risk of developing rickets and angular limb deformities. Darkly coloured and heavily fleeced animals have lower vitamin D concentrations because they have less skin exposure. Increased housing time also exacerbates vitamin D deficiency.



Prevention is always better than cure! Ensure adequate calcium and phosphorous is within the diet and supplement with injectable or oral Vitamin D from September/October to March/April depending on the weather and sunlight.

- ⇒ The recommended dose for injectable vitamin D is 1000-2000 IU per kg of body weight, under the skin repeated every 2 months (darker animals may benefit from 2000 IU per kg).
- ⇒ Oral Vitamin D should be dosed at 1000 IU per kg of bodyweight and repeated every month.

Blue Tongue Update:

Blue Tongue is here in the UK so please stay vigilant by monitoring your livestock for clinical signs. You can monitor the UK situation via the website/alerts. This a 'notifiable disease' spread by biting midges and needs to be reported to your vet if suspected.

Clinical signs:

Sheep:

Clinical signs are **more severe** compared to cattle and include pyrexia/fever, depression, reddening/ulceration/swelling around eyes/nose/mouth, haemorrhage, lesions around feet/lameness/laminitis, reproduction losses and death.

Cattle:

Clinical signs are **less severe** and include pyrexia, salivation, reddening/ulceration/swelling around eye/mouth/nose. Lameness/laminitis, teat lesions, reproduction losses. It can be subclinical with no clinical signs.

Goats and Camelids:

Clinical signs are **mild** with pyrexia/fever, ocular/nasal discharge, mild ulceration/swelling of lips/mucous membranes. It can be subclinical with no clinical signs.



<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/bluetongue>

WORM EGG COUNTS

We have recently invested in the newest technology for parasite egg recovery from faecal samples. This has improved accuracy over other methods and uses Artificial Intelligence systems. Results are available within 24 hours. We can screen for worm and liver fluke eggs on all species (equine, ruminants and camelids). If you would like a worm or fluke egg count please discuss the history and last worming with a vet and drop a **FRESH** sample in a **labelled** container. Please write your name/farm, animal details/species/pooled group, and the collection date.

MacArthur Barstow & Gibbs



V E T E R I N A R Y S U R G E O N S