

AHT 3,000 HORSE AND PONY OWNERS NEEDED TO PARTICIPATE IN FIGHT AGAINST LAMINITIS **RCVS**

More than 3,000 horse and pony owners are needed to collaborate on a new web-based research project, named 'CARE (Creating Awareness and Reporting Evidence) about laminitis', that aims to help all horse and pony owners reduce the threat posed by equine laminitis.

The four-year study, being undertaken by the Animal Health Trust (AHT), in partnership with the Royal Veterinary College (RVC), and generously funded by World Horse Welfare, is being conducted by PhD student, Danica (Dee) Pollard, based at the AHT. It will take a closer look at management factors which may contribute to the development or recurrence of laminitis within the British horse and pony population.

Benefits for horse owners taking part

As collaborators in this study you will:

- Actively contribute to research aimed at improving the health and welfare of all British horses and ponies
- Receive access to information and articles relevant to horse health
- Learn how to accurately estimate and monitor the weight of your horse/pony
- Have access to monthly records of your horse/pony for future reference
- Be given the chance to have your horse/pony as the 'Featured Equine' on the website
- Have the chance to win great prizes from our sponsors
- Feel good about helping researchers better understand the triggers of this debilitating disease.

How horse owners can help

Dee explains: "We need owners of any horse or pony, regardless of whether or not they have a history of laminitis, to register their animals and complete a detailed online baseline questionnaire. This will provide general information about their animal, their management and previous and current health."

Sections covered in the initial baseline questionnaire include:

- General information about your horse/pony
- Turnout and management of grazing
- Stabling and indoor environment
- Feeding
- Exercise
- Transport
- Hoof care
- Health management and recent health history.

Owners will subsequently be asked to review previously submitted information on a monthly basis, documenting any changes to the management routine or health of their animal(s). Owners will also be required to report any episodes of laminitis in their horses/ponies via an online reporting form. Information from the registered cohort of animals will be collected over a two-year period. Capturing changes in the animal's environment as they happen, and the occurrence of laminitis, will create a timeline of events, increasing certainty that exposure to a factor actually contributes to laminitis occurring or not occurring.

The main aims of this study are to:

- Estimate the frequency of owner-reported laminitis, including both horses that are diagnosed by a vet and those that aren't – thus we will know the impact this disease has on our animals
- Further investigate factors which increase or decrease the risk of an animal developing laminitis, especially focusing on factors relating to management that can potentially be changed by owners
- Provide owners with evidence-based guidelines that will reduce the impact of laminitis nationwide. "benefits not only for your own horses but for horses everywhere."

Horse owners interested in taking part in the 'CARE about laminitis' research project can register at www.careaboutlaminitis.org.uk, or for more information email danica.pollard@aht.org.uk.

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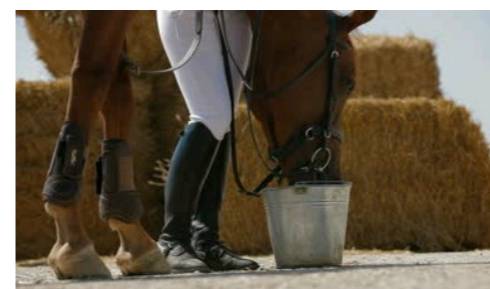
RCVS ACCREDITED PRACTICE (SMALL ANIMAL PRACTICE) / CORE STANDARDS
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EQUINE NEWSLETTER SUMMER 2015

Keeping Your Horse Hydrated

Whilst summer is not the only time of year when horses may suffer from dehydration long, hot days when horses are being exercised and competed can certainly accentuate the issue and bring the topic to the fore.



Dehydration in horses will affect a horse's performance and can also be life threatening. To avoid dehydration your horse should have access to fresh, clean water at all times. **DO NOT** restrict your horse's access to water at competitions. Some horses can be fussy and refuse to drink away from home. If that is the case it may be advisable to take some water from home or flavour the water with mint or apple juice to make the water more tempting.

After exercise on a hot day you should reduce sweat loss by cooling your horse off thoroughly after exercise. The less your horse sweats the less dehydrated he will become. At summer competitions and events you should try and keep your horse in the shade wherever possible. Unless the heat is severe your horse may be more comfortable in the horsebox or trailer as opposed to being tied up outside. Remember, your horse may be losing water without you necessarily being able to see it.

Post exercise Electrolytes can be used to help replace the essential salts that a horse loses when he sweats.

You should be concerned that your horse is dehydrated if:

- He produces dark urine or has not passed urine for some time.
- The appearance of the mucous membranes are congested and bright red in appearance.

How to measure dehydration in horses:

- One of the most reliable ways to test if your horse is dehydrated is to have a blood sample taken, this will reveal the level of proteins in the plasma and the proportion of red blood cells in the blood compared with the plasma.



- Previously, a skin pinch test has been used to measure hydration levels, however, studies have shown this is not a particularly good indicator and should not be relied upon.

Remember, as always, prevention is better than cure.

WORM EGG COUNTS

We recommend that you have a faecal worm egg count at least once a year, to monitor the effectiveness of your worming programme.

These are **FREE** if you have bought a wormer from Dalehead in the last 6 months.

Repeat Prescriptions

We would like to remind all clients with horses receiving long-term medication, that regular check ups are required in order for us to issue a repeat prescription.

Repeat prescription checks are for the benefit of the horse. It allows us to ensure the dosage is correct as well as monitor any possible ill-effects from the medication.



Check out our website www.daleheadvetgroup.co.uk for more information about caring for your pet, special offers, vet and staff profiles and much more!



PLANT POISONING IS AVOIDABLE

Before you use any new pasture you should check it thoroughly for the presence of any toxic plants or trees. When grazing is sparse horses and donkeys will be more inclined to eat any available foliage. You should bear in mind that they can also reach over and through fences and stretch to reach plants and trees growing outside the field boundary such as your prize rhododendron. Poor pasture management and over grazing can lead to the predominance of poisonous plants such as ragwort & bracken.

You should also bear in mind that some poisonous plants are bitter in their green (fresh) state but can become sweeter and more palatable if dried out e.g. if sprayed with weedkiller, pulled and left in the field or baled into hay or haylage. If you are pulling weeds / plants they should be removed from the paddock immediately. Always check the forage and remove any dried herbage that is unfamiliar to you. Leylandii and other evergreen trees are often used to screen arenas and such like, as such if you turn your horses loose in the arena for exercise you should always ensure the trees are out of reach.



Black Nightshade

The thoughtless disposal of garden waste, such as hedge trimmings containing yew or privet is the most common cause of sporadic cases of poisoning. Let your neighbours know that any garden waste such as hedge clippings or grass cuttings are potentially fatal and should never be put in the paddock or within your horse's reach.



Ragwort

Plants can appear and grow quickly so check all boundaries for evidence of poisonous plants on a regular basis, a good time to check the pasture is when you are poo picking, anything seen should be removed immediately. Always dispose of poisonous plants carefully to prevent them being accessed by any other horses and to prevent the seeds being dispersed back into your pasture.

If you suspect your horse or donkey has eaten parts of poisonous plants or trees or is showing any unusual symptoms you should call your vet **IMMEDIATELY**.

Some of the most common poisonous plants are listed below:

- Black Bryony
- Black Nightshade
- Bracken
- Buttercup
- Celandine
- Charlock
- Columbine
- Monkshood
- Potato
- Privet
- Ragwort
- Rhododendron
- Round Ivy
- Deadly Nightshade
- St Johns Wort
- Spurge
- White Bryony
- Woody Nightshade
- Horsetail
- Ivy
- Larkspur
- Cowbane
- Hellebore
- Hemlock
- Holly berries
- Foxglove
- Linseed
- Meadow Saffron

Trees to avoid:

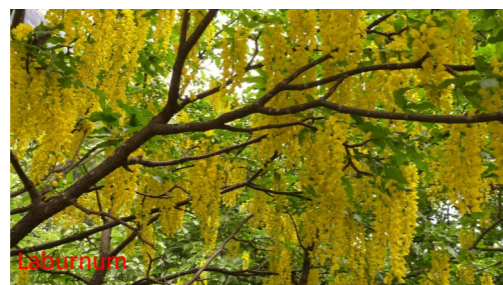
- Black walnut
- Elder
- Horse chestnut
- Laburnum
- Laurel
- Laurel Cherry
- Leylandii
- Oak
- Plum
- Peach
- Red Maple
- Sycamore
- Wild cherry
- Yew



Horse chestnut



Elder Tree



Laburnum



Oak Tree

Equine Clinic Appointments

When bringing a horse into our equine clinic at Rathmell for a procedure, investigation or surgery, it is our normal practice protocol to collect a deposit by card before the appointment.

If you intend to make a claim on your insurance policy please ensure you familiarise yourself with your insurance policy and speak to your Insurers beforehand confirming the level of cover in place. You should bring your claim form with you and the Policy Excess & administration fee will normally be collected at the time of the appointment. Occasionally clients have discovered that they were NOT covered for vets fees as they believed they were! Also - please remember to bring your **horse's passport** with you.

FREE LAB FEES

Cushings Disease Diagnosis



Talk About Laminitis is a national initiative provided by Boehringer Ingelheim Vetmedica, to improve awareness and understanding of the real underlying cause of laminitis. They are offering free ACTH laboratory fees to detect Equine Cushing's Disease from 1 July to 31 October, to help assist early identification of laminitis prone horses and ponies.

If you feel your horse might be at risk from 'cushings disease' we recommend that you discuss this with one of our vets. Should you then decide your horse requires testing and wish to take advantage of this offer please visit www.talkaboutlaminitis.co.uk to claim your voucher.* Please contact a member of our equine team for more information on 01729 823538.

*Only one voucher may be claimed per horse. Vouchers can only be used against lab fees for newly diagnosed cushings disease and **not** against follow up blood tests.

Coopers Fly Repellent Plus, the only product licensed to repel and kill flies on horses in the UK, is back!



We are now stocking Coopers Fly Repellent Plus. It is proven as an effective aid in the control of Sweet Itch and for the protection of horses from the misery of flies and lice. A single application provides up to four day's fly control and eliminates adult populations of biting lice and viable eggs for up to three months, without staining clothes or tack. The only fly repellent for horses containing Permethrin and Citronellol.

Available as a ready-to-use, topical application, Coopers Fly Repellent Plus is both a cost effective and convenient choice. Supplied in a 600ml pack/bottle, it has a shelf life of up to four years and the non-spray, wipe-on formulation is well tolerated by even the most flighty of horses.

SUMMER IS COMING - TIME TO THINK ABOUT SWEET ITCH



Cavalesse® from Vetsonic, available from Dalehead, is a unique nutritional supplement containing nicotinamide, which can help to repair and maintain a healthy skin barrier in horses prone to summer skin allergies.

After being exposed to the allergen, allergic horses can develop a Type I hypersensitivity reaction and excess histamine is released. Nicotinamide has been studied in a number of animals and has been shown to inhibit this inflammatory response – as well as strengthen the skin barrier. Feeding Cavalesse® is recommended before and during the summer season, to support the horse in having strong, healthy skin for defence against allergens.