Rosevean

VETERINARY PRACTICE

EQUINE NEWSLETTER

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AUTUMN WORMING:

Do you need to worm your horse?

Traditionally autumn is a time when horses are wormed but this should not be done without careful thought. In order to preserve the effectiveness of wormers and prevent worms from becoming resistant to them we must minimise the amount of wormer that is used and restrict the use of certain types of wormer.

Most horses will need treating for cyathostomin (red worm) larvae in the Autumn. These worms are commonly resistant to certain wormers so please contact us if you want to ensure you are using the correct type of wormer.

Horses also need to be checked or treated for tapeworms once or twice per year and Autumn is a good time to do this. A tapeworm saliva test, which can be performed at home by owners, detects tapeworm specific antibodies in saliva, and gives a result of low, borderline or high, which then allows targeted treatment for those who need it. Results are reported to your vet who can then discuss your individual horse's needs, and if necessary the most appropriate wormer.

Remember, if your vet thinks your horse is at risk, they may recommend treatment in autumn but not all horses will need deworming.

CUSHING'S DISEASE (PPID): TIME TO TEST

If your horse or pony is prone to laminitis, it's important to test for PPID.

The simplest and most common test for PPID is the ACTH test. A blood sample is taken which is then sent chilled to a lab and is measured for ACTH concentration. Horse's that are affected will have higher than normal ACTH levels.

The reference range for ACTH changes with the season to allow for the summer/autumn increase in pituitary activity which takes effect from late June until mid November.

It's important to note that while autumn is generally the recommended time for PPID testing, individual cases may vary. If a horse displays symptoms of PPID or if the owner has concerns about the horse's health, testing can be conducted at any time of the year.

Some of the common symptoms of PPID include:

- **Abnormal coat**
- **Excessive sweating**
- **Increased thirst/urination/appetite**
- **Muscle wasting**
- **Lethargy/weakness**
- **Delayed shedding of winter coat**
- **Recurrent infections**
- **Changes in behaviour**

EXPLORING EQUINE HEALTH

A guide on video endoscopy

Video endoscopy is a valuable diagnostic tool used in veterinary medicine to examine and evaluate the internal structures of a horse's body. This non-invasive procedure involves the use of a flexible endoscope, which is a long, thin tube equipped with a camera and light source at its tip. It allows vets to visually inspect various anatomical regions within the horse's body, such as the respiratory and gastrointestinal tracts.

One of the most common applications of equine video endoscopy is the examination of the upper airways. Horses, like humans, can experience issues such as airway obstructions, inflammation, and abnormal tissue growth. With the help of video endoscopy, vets can guide the endoscope through the horse's nostrils or mouth to visualise the larynx, pharynx, and trachea. This enables them to identify problems such as nasal discharge, coughing, nose bleeds, and other respiratory conditions that may affect the horse's breathing and overall performance.

Another crucial area where equine video endoscopy is employed is the gastrointestinal tract. By inserting the endoscope through the horse's oesophagus and into the stomach or intestines, vets can identify ulcers, tumours, bleeding, or other abnormalities that might be causing digestive issues. This information helps in formulating appropriate treatment plans and dietary adjustments to enhance the horse's gastrointestinal health.

Equine video endoscopy offers several benefits, including:

- **Accurate Diagnosis: Direct visualisation of internal structures allows for precise identification of issues that might not be apparent through other diagnostic methods**
- **Minimally Invasive: Endoscopy minimises the need for invasive procedures and reduces stress on the horse**
- **Real-time Assessment: The live video feed enables vets to observe the horse's anatomy in real-time, aiding in immediate decision-making**
- **Guided Procedures: Video endoscopy can be used to guide certain therapeutic procedures, such as removing foreign objects or performing biopsies**

For more information on video endoscopy, please contact our practice.

WHAT TO LOOK FOR WHEN BUYING A HORSE

Essential factors to consider when purchasing a horse

When buying a horse, there are several important factors to consider to ensure you make an informed and responsible decision. Purchasing a horse is a significant commitment, both financially and in terms of care, so taking the time to thoroughly assess your options is essential.

Here are some key points to look for when buying a horse:

Purpose and goals:
Are you looking for a leisure riding horse or a competition horse? Your goals will help determine the breed, age, and training level that best suits your needs.

Experience and skill level:
Choose a horse with a temperament and training level that matches your abilities. A novice rider might require a well-trained, gentle horse, while an experienced rider could handle a horse with more energy and potential.

Breed and conformation:
Research different horse breeds and their characteristics. Consider the horse's conformation as it can affect soundness and performance.

Health and soundness:
A pre-purchase veterinary examination (PPE) is crucial to assess the horse's overall health, soundness, and any potential medical issues.

Age:
Younger horses might require more training and have unpredictable development, while older horses could have more health concerns. Choose an age that suits your experience and goals.

Training and behaviour:
Evaluate the horse's training level and behaviour. A well-trained horse with good manners and a willing attitude will likely be easier to handle and work with, especially for less experienced riders.

History and background:
Obtain as much information as possible about the horse's history, including previous owners, training, medical records, and any behavioural issues.

Legalities and documentation:
Ensure all necessary legal documentation, such as ownership transfer and health records, are properly handled. This helps prevent any future disputes and ensures a smooth transition of ownership.

Passport/Microchip:
Horses must not be sold on without a passport and microchip. It is a legal requirement that all horses, ponies and donkeys in the UK must have an equine passport and microchip - even if they are retired or do not ever leave their field.

Please contact the practice to discuss booking in a PPE.

Take your time, do thorough research, and don't hesitate to ask questions before making your final decision. The well-being and happiness of both you and the horse depend on making the right choice.

WHAT'S INVOLVED IN A LAMENESS EXAMINATION?

History and observation:
The vet begins by gathering information about the horse's medical history, previous injuries, exercise routine, and any recent changes in behaviour. They observe the horse's gait at rest, looking for any noticeable abnormalities, asymmetries, or signs of discomfort.

Palpation and manipulation:
The vet examines the horse's limbs, muscles, joints, and other relevant areas through palpation and manipulation. They look for signs of swelling, heat, pain, or sensitivity. By applying pressure and flexing or extending joints, they can assess the range of motion and identify any areas of discomfort.

Flexion tests:
Flexion tests involve applying controlled stress to specific joints by flexing them for a specified period. This helps to detect subtle lameness that may not be apparent during regular movement. The vet observes the horse's gait immediately after releasing the flexed joint to see if any lameness becomes more pronounced.

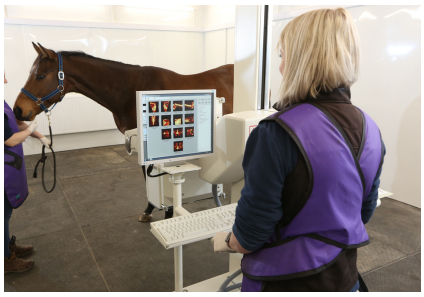
Walk and trot in hand and lungeing:
The horse is then evaluated in motion. The vet will ask the horse to walk and trot in a straight line on a hard surface, observing its movement from different angles. They look for irregularities in the gait, such as head-bobbing, short strides, dragging of the toes, or changes in the rhythm. In some cases, the horse may be lunged on a circle to further assess its gait and lameness under different conditions.

Diagnostic blocks:
If the source of lameness remains unclear, the vet may use diagnostic nerve or joint blocks. This involves injecting a local anaesthetic into specific nerves or joints to temporarily numb the area. By selectively blocking different areas, the vet can identify the exact location of the lameness. If the lameness improves after a specific block, it suggests that the blocked region is the source of the problem.

Imaging and diagnostics:
In certain cases, additional diagnostic tests may be necessary to obtain a more detailed evaluation. This can include radiographs (X-rays), ultrasound, magnetic resonance imaging (MRI), or computed tomography (CT) scans. These tests help visualise the bones, joints, ligaments, and soft tissues, providing valuable insights into the nature and extent of the problem.

Diagnosis and treatment plan:
Based on the findings from the lameness examination, the vet makes a diagnosis and develops a tailored treatment plan. The plan may include medication, rest, physical therapy, corrective shoeing, joint injections, or surgery, depending on the underlying cause and severity of the lameness.




WHY DIAGNOSTIC IMAGING TECHNIQUES ARE SO VALUABLE

in a lameness examination

Diagnostic imaging techniques play a vital role in identifying the underlying causes of lameness, allowing vet to develop appropriate treatment plans.

Here are some commonly used diagnostic imaging techniques in equine lameness:

Radiography (X-rays)

Radiographs are the most widely used imaging technique in equine lameness diagnosis. They provide detailed images of the bones and joints, allowing vets to detect fractures, joint diseases (such as osteoarthritis), and bony abnormalities. X-rays are particularly effective for evaluating the limbs, foot balance and bony structures.

Ultrasonography

Ultrasonography utilises high-frequency sound waves to create real-time images of soft tissues, such as tendons, ligaments, and muscles. It is especially useful in evaluating injuries to these structures, including tears, strains, and inflammation. Ultrasonography can also aid in assessing joint capsules and identifying fluid accumulation or synovial pathologies.

Nuclear Scintigraphy

Nuclear scintigraphy, also known as a bone scan, involves injecting a small amount of radioactive material into the horse's bloodstream. The radioactive substance accumulates in areas of increased bone metabolism, highlighting regions of potential injury or disease. Scintigraphy is great for finding fractures or issues in the back/pelvis.

Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI)

MRI uses a powerful magnetic field and radio waves to generate detailed images of soft tissues, bones, and joints. It provides excellent visualisation of structures like cartilage, tendons and ligaments. MRI is particularly valuable in diagnosing complex lameness cases, such as injuries to the hoof, or suspensory ligament.

Computed Tomography (CT)

CT scans produce cross-sectional images by combining multiple X-ray views. It can provide detailed information about fractures, bone tumours, or other conditions affecting the skeletal system.