



Spring 2010

ISLE VALLEY EQUINE CLINIC

BUY WITH PEACE OF MIND!

Buying a horse or pony can be a very stressful time – a **Five Stage Vetting** will give you the peace of mind you need to help you make the right decision. For further details contact 01460 66099 or download a free information sheet from our website.

LAMINITIS

Laminitis is a disease that strikes fear into the hearts of horse owners the world over. At this time of the year, when at last the grass begins to grow, it is the season to be extra vigilant. Laminitis is literally “inflammation of the laminae”, the laminae being the interlocking layers that join the inside of the horny hoof capsule to the outside of the live tissues of the foot. This layer physically suspends the weight of the horse off the ground and is vital for normal hoof function. When the laminae become inflamed in an attack of laminitis, the join between hoof and bone swells and loosens and becomes very painful. This can be followed by anatomical changes such as rotation and sinking of the pedal bone within the hoof, or even shedding of the entire hoof. Evidently laminitis is best avoided, so what causes the condition?

There are in fact many causes, including toxic colic, concussion and some infections, but by far the most common cause is exposure to rich grazing, especially if there is a sudden change in the diet. There are many factors that increase the risk of laminitis actually occurring: at this time in the spring the grass grows in spurts due to the warm days and frosty nights. This results in the build-up of complex sugars called fructans that are not easily digested by horses and can cause bacterial ‘blooms’ in the intestine that then release toxins into the blood. The risks are increased by the horse/pony being overweight, for two reasons; the heavier the load on the laminae the more stress they are under and the metabolism of overweight ponies changes and they become ‘insulin



resistant’ – Equine Metabolic Syndrome (EMS).

There are a few measures we can take to head off an attack of laminitis. These are especially important if your horse has a history of previous bouts of the condition, and also if you have a native breed pony that is prone to getting fat.

1. Grazing management: Do not allow your horse/pony unlimited access to spring grass, particularly when there are frosty nights and warm days. It is better to limit the area of grazing, rather than limit the time of exposure. This avoids peaks and troughs of sugar intake.
2. Do not allow your horse/pony to get too fat. Try to slim them down in the winter as it is nearly impossible to get a pony to lose weight in the spring and summer.
3. Exercise: Try to work your horse/pony regularly to keep him fit. Not only will this help with weight control, but will also keep his metabolism on the boil and less likely to become insulin resistant.
4. Foot care: Keep the hooves regularly trimmed, regardless of whether the pony is shod or not. Overgrown feet put more strain on the laminae and increase the risk of an attack.
5. If you are concerned that your horse or pony may have Cushings or is insulin resistant then there are tests available. Both Cushings and Insulin resistance affect the metabolism of the horse which can make them susceptible to laminitis. These conditions can be treated.

If you have concerns and would like to speak to a vet please contact the clinic on 01460 66099 between 8am and 9am before the vets are out on their rounds.

ARTIFICIAL INSEMINATION OF MARES

Reproduction is a large part of our workload and our experienced veterinary team has artificially inseminated numerous mares with both chilled and frozen semen for many years. Mares are admitted to Isle Valley Equine Clinic at the first signs of being in season. If there is uncertainty as to when the mare is in season help is on hand – simply phone 01460 66099 for advice.

Once admitted we then take an endometrial swab to check for uterine infection that can reduce the chance of conception. Mares are then examined regularly both manually and by ultrasound to monitor their uterine health and follicular development.

When the dominant follicle is approaching readiness we will phone you and ask you to arrange semen delivery to us. The mare will be given a 'holding injection' to help ovulation prior to being inseminated. She will then be scanned again post insemination to confirm ovulation and check for fluid in the uterus.

The fees for up to five days stay at the clinic, endometrial swab, smear and associated laboratory fees, scanning as required, 'holding injection', insemination and post insemination scan are from £300 for chilled semen insemination and from £450 for frozen semen insemination.

CLIENT EVENINGS: ALLERGIES IN HORSES

Many horses suffer from allergies whether it be skin allergies such as sweet itch or dust allergies resulting in COPD. During this evening's presentation our vets will focus on some of these complaints with advice on how best to deal



with them. They will be joined by a representative from **Janssen Animal Health** who have recently developed **Cavalesse**, a new product which helps to maintain and support a healthy skin in

horses prone to summer skin allergies. Kindly sponsored by Janssen Animal Health.

Venue: Seavington Millennium Hall

Time: 7.30pm

Date: Wednesday 24 March 2010

Tickets: Free, but places are limited so please phone **01460 66099** to reserve your place.

RCVS ACCREDITATION

The Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons has accredited Isle Valley Veterinary Group as an RCVS General Practice specialising in Small Animals and Equine. This



means that we have passed rigorous inspections covering areas such as health and safety, hygiene, the provision of 24 hour cover and clinical governance as well as having access to on site laboratory facilities for diagnostic testing.

"We are delighted to receive this award" said Practice Manager Jan De Caux. "It provides well-deserved recognition of the hard work and dedication from all our staff. It also gives reassurance for our clients that we provide the very best care of their pets and horses behind the scenes as well as in the areas that they see when they come to the practice."

The practice will be re-inspected every four years with in-between spot checks ensuring standards are maintained. It is a voluntary initiative but the RCVS accreditation means that as a client you can rest assured that we offer the highest quality of care in all areas of their work.

STAFF NEWS & KEEPING IN TOUCH

After 9 years **Clare Lawrence** will be moving to pastures new. She will be sorely missed by all at Isle Valley Vets and we wish her all the best in the future.

If you would like to receive regular newsletters, articles and up-to-date information about the latest events simply contact or e-mail the clinic (admin@islevallvets.co.uk). Also, do look at our website for downloadable information sheets on many topics.

Contact the clinic for more information or look at our website
www.islevallvets.co.uk

Equine Clinic: Eleighwater, Chard, TA20 3AF **Tel: 01460 66099**

Small Animal Clinics: Tetts Farm, West Street, Hinton St George, TA17 8SB **Tel: 01460 73398**
St Michael Road, Creech St Michael, TA3 5DP **Tel: 01823 444234**