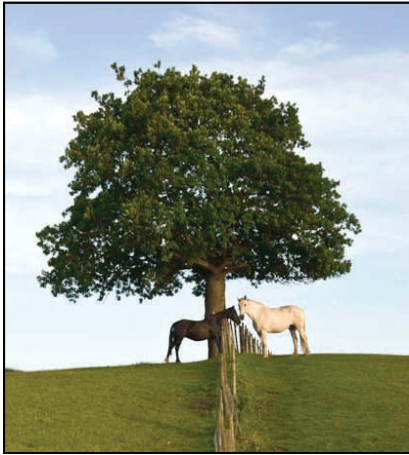


EQUINE NEWSLETTER

Summer 2009-2010



SUMMER REMINDERS

- **Foals**—Foals should begin their tetanus vaccination program at 12 weeks of age. We recommend deworming foals at this time, ensuring you use a foal-safe dewormer.
- **Water + Shade**—It is important that your horse drinks plenty in the hot weather. Excessive sweating leads to electrolyte loss which can be replaced using electrolyte powders and gels. These are especially important at shows. Adding molasses to water can encourage drinking.
- **Flies + Flyveils**—Always check under flyveils daily, don't assume that everything is okay just because their eyes are covered!

CLINIC NEWS

We are delighted to have Dr Ruth Sanders join us as an equine veterinarian.

Ruth qualified from the University College of Dublin, Ireland. She worked in a mixed practice, with a primary focus on horse work, dealing mainly with Thoroughbreds and pleasure horses.

After leaving Ireland, she then spent six months travelling throughout Asia and arrived at Tatura at the beginning of October - just in time for our busy breeding season.

Her special interests include reproduction and lameness and Ruth is incorporating a variety of overseas techniques into our clinical cases. Coming from a climate where a hot summer day is 26° we hope she will survive our summer heat!

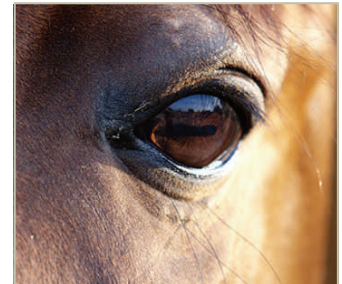
GRASS SEEDS AND CORNEAL ULCERS

We see an increased number of eye ulcers over the summer months, many involving grass seeds. Grass seeds (particularly barley grass) like to nestle underneath the eyelids, and as the horse blinks, the rough spikes continually rub against the cornea, leading to ulceration.

Not all grass seeds are seen easily - In some cases, it is not until we sedate the horse and desensitize the eye (to allow close examination) that we find them hidden.

Some of the signs to watch out for include;

- A watery eye
- Squinting
- A cloudy or white spot on the eye
- Swollen, red membranes



At Tatura Veterinary Clinic, we take sore eyes very seriously, and recommend immediate veterinary examination if you see any of these signs in your horse. Left untreated, even the most superficial corneal ulcers can deteriorate rapidly and become sight-threatening.

TATURA AND CAMPASPE VETERINARY CLINICS

Please contact Amber, Clare or Ruth to discuss any of your horse concerns.

29 ROSS STREET, TATURA, VICTORIA 3616

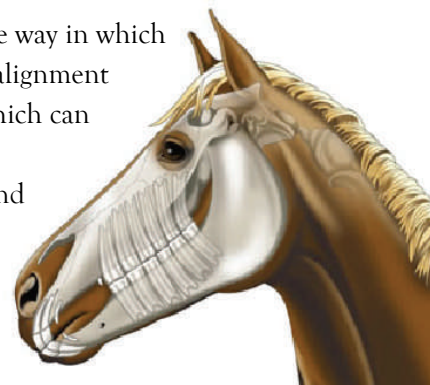
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DENTAL HEALTH

Unlike our teeth, horses teeth continue to grow throughout their life. Due to the way in which they grind their food, they develop sharp edges on the tooth margins and other alignment abnormalities. Changes caused by abnormal wear create pain and discomfort, which can affect their work.

Routine dental examinations every 12 months are important to detect, correct and maintain the proper and efficient dental working of the equine mouth. Young horses are particularly prone to developing cheek ulcers as their softer enamel means they wear their teeth more quickly. Call to book your horses dental examination now.



IN FOCUS— ‘TYING UP’

Equine Exertional Rhabdomyolysis (ER) is the fancy medical term for what is commonly known as tying up. Unlike the common perception, tying up is not a straight-forward problem and incorporates many different categories.

WHAT IS ER?

ER occurs when there is an inadequate flow of oxygen-carrying blood to the muscles of an exercising horse. This alters the muscle fibers' ability to contract efficiently, and continued exercise causes muscle damage and cramping.



WHAT ARE THE CAUSES OF ER?

1. Horses maintained on a high carbohydrate diet during periods of rest, and then exercised heavily.
2. Unfit horses, worked too hard.
3. Young fillies (usually racehorses) with Recurrent Exertional Rhadyomyolysis (RER).
4. Polysaccharide Storage Myopathy (PSSM) , a genetic disease seen in QH and related breeds.
5. Horses worked to a state of metabolic collapse (eg. Endurance horses).
6. Electrolyte and mineral imbalances.

WHAT ARE THE SIGNS OF TYING UP?

The first sign of tying-up is a stiff gait and often complete reluctance to move forward. This can occur during exercise, but more commonly following work, when the horse has been standing still and is then asked to move. A horse that has tied-up often appears anxious, has an increased heart and respiratory rate and may be sweaty. On palpation (which is often resented!), the hindquarter muscles are hard and painful. In severely affected horses, the breakdown of muscle is enough to cause brown discolouration of their urine.

IMMEDIATE TREATMENT

Absolute restricted movement is the key, until the horse is willing to move without encouragement. We recommend veterinary treatment, as prescription medication is required to alleviate pain, reduce ongoing muscle damage and encourage muscle repair. Electrolyte supplement is also beneficial to maintain muscle hydration and support kidney function. It is important to keep the horse warm. Massage is best avoided until several days following an episode.

BLOOD TESTING (CK AND AST MUSCLE ENZYMES)

At Tatura Vet Clinic, we can perform in-clinic blood tests, allowing us to quickly diagnose an episode of tying-up, assess the severity of muscle damage that has occurred and monitor recovery over the following weeks.

ONGOING MANAGEMENT

Once a horse has had an episode of tying-up, they are at a high risk of having repeat episodes. Certain dietary changes have been shown to reduce the incidence of tying-up, and this is particularly important for horses that experience chronic tying-up problems. Low carbohydrate, high fat diets are recommended, with additional Vitamin E, selenium and electrolyte supplementation. Management changes are also recommended, such as 24/7 turnout and extended warm-up and cool-down periods when the horse is exercised.