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EQUINE NEWSLETTER

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Worried about Laminitis risk?

There is a way we can quantify the laminitic risk category of your horse or pony. Blood samples sent to Liphook Veterinary Clinic are evaluated for glucose and insulin levels and relative insulin resistance the results enable high or low laminitis risk categories to be estimated. If a high risk category is detected then suitable management controls can be considered.

We feel this is especially important for heavy weight and overweight cob and native pony types.

If you are interested in the profile please ring the surgery on 01729 823538 and ask for Kate or Leanne.



Equine fact sheets

There are now a wide range of fact sheets and FAQ's on the Dalehead Veterinary Group website for horse owners to browse and get any information they may need. Common topics are covered ranging from dental care and hoof care to care of a horse before and after surgery, also many of the common conditions such as laminitis and Navicular disease. To read any of the fact sheets please visit the practice website on www.daleheadvetgroup.co.uk

Vaccination Reminders

We would like to stress to clients that vaccination reminders are sent as a courtesy only and that the responsibility for ensuring your horse remains up to date with its vaccinations lies solely with the owner. Thank you for your co-operation in this matter.

Insurance Claim Form Fees

We have had several queries regarding the £11.75 charge itemised on accounts as Insurance Form Completion which insurance companies do not cover as part of the policy. Please be assured that this charge is applied to cover administration costs which amount to several days work per month processing claim forms, printing and posting copy invoices, chasing claims and answering queries on your behalf. We appreciate that this is an extra cost to you and so as a goodwill gesture, this charge will be refundable upon receipt of the full excess within 30 days of invoicing.

Topic of the month: Caring for the older horse/pony

The average horse lives to be approximately 20 years of age, although many ponies can live longer to the age of 30 years. Older horses and ponies need a little care to ensure that they remain healthy and happy.

Disease conditions affecting the older horse

Older horses and ponies are more likely to suffer from tumours, either of the skin or internal organs, some hormonal conditions, such as Cushing's disease, degenerative diseases such as arthritis and muscle weakness, allergic respiratory disease and diseases of the liver and kidneys. This seems like a daunting list but most horses and ponies can and do, lead happy and comfortable lives even in the presence of one or more of these conditions. Attention must be paid to appetite, attitude, and response to the environment and owners should look out for behaviour changes which may indicate poor health.



Teeth and feet

Feet should be kept trimmed even if the horse is retired and not ridden. This not only helps the horse move around but reduces the risk of abnormal hoof growth and associated foot pain developing, which may interfere with the horses ability to eat and will help maintain quality of life.

Regular attention to tooth care will enable the horse or pony to make best use of the feed they are receiving. A visit by your vet once or possibly twice a year is necessary to ensure that sharp enamel edges or overgrowths do not form.



Feeding

Older horses and ponies need access to good quality feed and pasture as their nutrient demands increase because their digestive system becomes less efficient at converting food into energy body tissues. There are a wide variety of concentrates that are specially designed for the older horse that provide them with the correct level of nutrients.



Vaccination and worming

Older horses and ponies become more susceptible to the damaging effects of parasites and infections. The maintenance of regular worming and vaccination programmes is essential to reduce the risk of ill health, either directly or indirectly related to parasite damage or infections such as Equine Influenza (flu).

Most old horses and ponies are able to lead a good quality life for many years after their working life is over. They are often excellent companions for younger horses or foals. They can also be wonderful first introduction for young children for the joys of just having a horse around.