

White Lodge Equine Clinic

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Welcome to our Spring/Summer Newsletter!

With the weather having recently warmed up and the grass suddenly come through, laminitis is at the forefront of many of our minds and our vets and farriers have seen a sharp increase in cases. Although native and overweight ponies are most at risk, no horse is immune to the disease. Equine Cushing's disease and Equine Metabolic Syndrome also put animals at particular risk. Please speak to one of our vets if you have any concerns. Prevention of laminitis can be challenging but is much easier than a cure!!

We are saying goodbye to Carly in June, who leaves us after nine years. She's been an invaluable member of the team, and wish her every success on her move to Scotland!



GET OUT WITH YOUR HORSE THIS SUMMER

After the past few years of having our fun limited, why not make a resolution this year to get out more with your horse!?

We are lucky in this area to have multiple fun rides, shows and beautiful places to ride, and keeps life interesting for our horses as well as us rather than plodding the same old tracks!

Social media is often the best place to find local 'fun rides', with many rides offering jumps, refreshments and rosettes.

Or for more organised fun.. how about getting ready for some local shows such as:

30th July - Porlock Horse Show

18th August - Dunster Show

19th August - Brompton Regis Show

(Please check all dates and more information with organisers!)

Or if you're struggling with transport or can't do those dates... maybe arrange a few dates with friends and ride to a pub. Supporting local businesses and great refreshment - it's a win-win!



WHEN DO I START WORM EGG COUNTING?

Targeting use of wormers to the right horses at the right time is important to prevent build up of resistance to wormers, and prevent unnecessary exposure of horses and the environment to chemicals.

Throughout the grazing season (when the grass is growing), faecal worm egg counts (FWECs) are the best indicator of how many worms a horse is carrying. They are not perfect however, as eggs can be intermittently shed, and young worms may not have started laying eggs; but they are the best guide we currently have, and are an invaluable tool to direct correct worming.

We recommend starting FWECs when the grass starts growing generally, as this is at about the same temperature as the worms will all start to 'wake up'! Normally about mid-March, and samples should be taken every 8-10 weeks until the grass stops growing in the Autumn. Our vets will then discuss an appropriate wormer to be used if needed!



Cyathostomins (small redworms)

Focus on: EQUINE NOSE BLEEDS (EPISTAXIS)

Nose bleeds in horses can range from minor annoyance to a life threatening emergency. But when should owners start to worry?

Common causes of the equine nose bleed:

- **Trauma** to the head - such as a kick or fall. Fractures or soft tissue swelling may also be present
 - We commonly see nose bleeds after a scope or tube is passed up a horses nose. These can look dramatic but resolve after a short while!
- **Sinus infections** can lead to blood vessels being broken down. Pus-like nasal discharge can also be seen
- **Abscesses** in the nasal cavities or throat
- **Foreign bodies** in the nostrils or airways such as twigs
- Less commonly **tumours** (ethmoid haematomas) in the upper nasal passages
- **Guttural pouch mycosis**- a fungal infection in the guttural pouch can result in severe bleeding, and sometimes death, if the fungus damages an artery.
- **Exercise induced pulmonary haemorrhage** - seen in performance horses undergoing fast exercise where small blood vessels in the lungs rupture. This decreases athletic performance but does not usually cause illness.



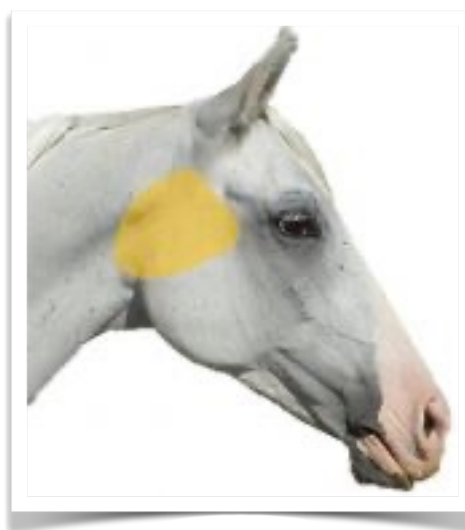
What to do if your horse has a nose bleed?

- **Do not panic.**
 - What may seem like a lot of blood to us, is often a very small amount to a horse
- **Contact us immediately** if you are concerned about the volume of blood, or a small amount of blood has been coming out for **more than 15 minutes**
 - We can then advise an immediate examination or to arrange further investigations

- **If a large amount of blood is coming out** (a stream of blood that is not slowing)
 - Keep the horse as calm and still as possible
 - **DO NOT attempt to pack the nostrils or obstruct the bleed**
 - **A cold towel or ice pack can be placed below the eyes** if this will not panic the horse. This is to try to cool and slow down any bleeding vessels
- **After an examination**
 - X-rays may be useful to rule out fractures from a trauma, see pus or blood in the sinuses and to look for foreign bodies or tumours.
- **Endoscopy** can also be used to examine the guttural pouches and nasal passages

What treatments might be used for a nose bleed?

- Treatment will depend on the cause.
- Trauma will usually resolve with rest and antibiotics to prevent further infection in the sinus.
- Infection in the sinuses will sometimes need further treatment if antibiotics alone do not treat it. This can involve flushing the sinuses via a small hole made in the bone of the face.
- Foreign bodies are often able to be removed via endoscope.
- Sometimes referral may be necessary, for example, horses with guttural pouch mycosis can undergo surgery to occlude the damaged artery and receive direct anti-fungal medication.



Location of the guttural pouch. There are two guttural pouches, one on each side of the throat. (Image from American College of Veterinary Surgeons)