

KEYSTONE EQUINE VET SERVICES



SPRING 2014 NEWSLETTER

Spring Is Coming—What Can You Do To Promote A Healthy Summer

Spring is coming and everyone seems to be catching the bug. What can you do to make sure your horse doesn't catch anything more serious?

A well developed preventive health plan is vital for helping your equine athlete perform at his best.

Vaccinations: Always the cornerstone of a preventive health plan. We aim for our spring vaccinations to be performed anywhere from mid-March thru May. Vaccination recommendations may vary depending on your horse's individual exposures.

Biosecurity: Vaccines should not be your only prevention plan against diseases. Proper quarantine intervals are important for new farm arrivals. Disinfection of equipment and tack when used for multiple animals or used at different stables. Trying to reduce exposure to other horses at shows and rides is also important. These are just a few things to consider.

Parasite prevention: Spring is an important time for fecal

egg counts to be sure that parasites are in check. The aim is to identify any high shedding horses prior to being turned out and contaminating all the pastures.

Dentistry: Dental exams and proper floating is essential for proper chewing and feed efficiency. Additionally, it is vital to mouth comfort and a happy horse while on the bit. Why risk poor performance and bad behavior due to bad teeth.

Hoof Care: The wet weather of spring followed by the dry of the summer can be very hard on equine feet. Hoof conditioners can be protective from the wet and hydrate in the dry. I often see cracking feet when owners quit using conditioners at these times.

Soundness Support: Soundness evaluations are important spring events to be sure we are ready for the riding and competing season. Subtle lameness is better dealt with in its early stages. To promote soundness and comfort we can always consider acupuncture therapy and discuss prevention products like supplements, Pentosan, Adequan or Legend.

The Proof Is In The Numbers—Management Controls Parasites

Parasite control has been a hot topic for the last ten years. Proper farm management is the key to parasite control. Numerous farms have found spring and fall fecal egg counts combined with close attention to farm and pasture management has resulted in many of them only needing to use chemical de-wormers twice a year. Manure is the source of all of these parasites and we need to do a better job at managing its removal from the horse's environment.

What can we do:

- *Reduce stocking density (**no grass = too many horses**)
 - *Clean manure from pastures weekly (or more often)
 - *Identify high egg shedding horses for individualized treatment
 - *Keep pasture mates the same—don't mix groups
 - *Pasture rotation is good but the old pasture must sit idle for 1-2 months
 - *Feed in pails or racks—not on the ground
- *Contact me for other management considerations**



Scott Angstadt, DVM
1236 Easton Road
Riegelsville, PA 18077
610-749-0488
www.KeystoneEquineVet.com





Equine Herpes Virus (Rhino) FAQ'S

1. What is equine herpes virus (EHV)?

EHV are viruses that are found in most horses all over the world. Almost all horses have been infected with the virus and have no serious side effects. It is unknown what causes some of the horses to develop the serious neurological forms that may be fatal. Equine herpes virus myeloencephalopathy (EHM) is another name for the neurologic form of the disease.

2. EHV is a family of viruses which are named by numbers such as EHV 1, 3, 4.

EHV is a common DNA virus that occurs in horse populations worldwide. The two most common strains are EHV-1, which causes abortion, respiratory disease and neurologic disease; and EHV-4, which usually causes respiratory disease only but can occasionally cause abortion and rarely neurological disease.

Respiratory disease caused by EHV is most common in weaned foals and yearlings, often in autumn and winter. Adult horses are more likely than younger ones to transmit the virus without showing signs of infection.

EHV-1 myeloencephalopathy (EHM) results from widespread vascular or blood vessel injury after damage to the lining of the blood vessels of the blood brain barrier. Neurologic signs result from inflammation of the blood vessels, blood clots, and death of neurologic tissue. EHM cases occur singly or can affect multiple exposed horses. They may or may not be associated with a previous or ongoing EHV-1 respiratory disease outbreak.

3. How does EHV spread?

EHV-1 is contagious and spread by direct horse-to-horse contact via the respiratory tract through nasal secretions. It is important to know that this disease can also be spread indirectly through contact with physical objects contaminated with the virus:

- Human contaminated hands or clothing
- Contaminated equipment, tack, feed and buckets.
- Contaminated trailers used for transporting horses

The air around the horse that is shedding the virus can also be contaminated with infectious virus. Although it is known that the virus can be airborne, it is difficult to establish the distance the virus can spread in this manner under typical horse management and environmental conditions.

4. How long can the virus live outside of the horse's body? This includes on clothing, footwear, walls, buckets, tack, etc...

The virus is estimated to be viable for up to 7 days in the environment under normal circumstances, but remain alive for a maximum of one month under perfect environmental conditions. Most important is to first clean equipment and horse housing areas. *(Please Note: It is really important to wash and rinse where you can prior to applying disinfectants.)* By cleaning first, this allows for removal of organic material which makes the disinfectants more effective. After this cleaning, follow with a disinfection process. The virus is easily killed in the environment by most disinfectants. Conventional disinfectants and detergents are the best. It is important to perform hand hygiene (wash hands with soap and dry thoroughly or use alcohol-based hand sanitizer) when moving between horses.

5. What are some of the signs of EHV?

After infection, incubation period may be as short as 24 hours, but is typically 4-6 days, but can be longer. EHV-1 typically causes a biphasic (two-phase) fever peaking on day 1 or 2 and again on day 6 or 7. With respiratory infections there is often serous or mucoid nasal and ocular discharge, but not a lot of coughing. There may be some persistent enlargement of submandibular lymph nodes (lymph nodes under the jaw). With the neurologic form there are typically minimal respiratory signs, with fever (rectal temperature greater than 102 degrees F) being the only warning sign. Neurologic disease appears suddenly and is usually rapidly progressing, reaching its peak intensity within 24 to 48 hours from onset of neurologic signs. Clinical signs of the neurologic disease may include:

- Nasal discharge
- Hind limb weakness
- Lethargy
- Head tilt
- Leaning against a fence or wall to maintain balance
- Incoordination
- Loss of tail tone
- Urine dribbling
- Inability to rise

(Excerpts from AAEP.org)





Acupuncture Applications

An increasing number of clients are exploring the possibilities of Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCVM) and Acupuncture (ACP) Therapy. Many questions revolve around how is it performed and what is it beneficial for?

A TCVM Scan is basically a stimulation scan of multiple acupuncture points throughout the body surface. Certain points are termed “alarm” or “trigger” points which may be indicative of certain disease states or pain indicators for particular body parts. This scan along with pulse quality and tongue analysis helps to put together a pattern diagnosis that then guides the acupuncture treatment. Treating a pattern diagnosis is much more beneficial to achieving a positive outcome as compared to “cookbook” ACP where the same points are used for every horse.

The main areas I have been treating horses has been for musculoskeletal pain, most notably in the hind limbs. Many riding horses will show discomfort in the hind end even though they are not exhibiting clinical lameness. With ACP we can treat this soreness and with regular checkups, can actually work to prevent it in the future.

Another area of muscle soreness that is very responsive to this treatment is back pain.



“with Fin getting older and his history of a fracture, I try all I can to keep him sound and comfortable. Acupuncture has given me another therapy to achieve this goal.”

*Kelly Burland
Travelda Farm*



Modern western medicine has limited treatments to offer for back soreness. Whether it is a direct problem like saddle soreness or secondary to hind limb lameness, ACP has shown to be excellent therapy for this issue.

Additionally, TCVM allows us another way to improve the quality of life for the older horse. Supporting the bones and body functions of the geriatric horse can help them to feel young again. Through pattern diagnosis we can support the body of an older horse that is dealing with Cushing’s syndrome, arthritis, digestive disorders or laminitis to name a few.

Acupuncture can be beneficial for any problem. Certain issues and long chronic problems can be a bit more difficult to treat. Many horses can benefit from a maintenance type schedule to identify underlying problems or to promote better health to prevent future issues. Depending on the circumstances this could be twice a year or could be monthly.

I honestly believe the benefits of TCVM for your horse far outweigh the latest trendy supplement or piece of tack. Consider what it may offer for your trusty steed. Feel free to ask me more about it.

Reminder Central (as per the business manager)

- Think about your spring plan for coggins and vaccinations. You are not late at this point but aim to leave proper time before shows or hauling so vaccines can take effect and blood work can return.
- Plan spring fecal egg counts so we can decrease contamination of pastures.
- Please remember my policy is to do billing at time of service. This enables me to keep pharmaceutical prices down as low as possible.
- Emergencies— After hours I usually let calls go to message. Do not fear, I check them as soon as I am aware and call back as soon as possible. In my opinion, answering services only add confusion and more time to the response. General question messages will be answered next business day.



*Nubby
Business Manager*

