



EQUINE AUTUMN NEWSLETTER



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Autumn

October 2011

MULLACOTT EQUINE HOSPITAL

Update on Paul Jarvis:

Thank you very much for all the kind interest in Paul's progress. Having suffered a broken back in a fall during a show jumping event in August, Paul has been recuperating in a back brace at home. You will all be glad to know that he is making excellent progress and expects to be out of the brace soon and starting physiotherapy .

He has been using the time well continuing his studies for a higher qualification in equine medicine. We are all looking forward to his return.



Let's 'Talk About Cushing's'

Has your horse or pony suffered from laminitis in the past?

Is your horse overly hairy, looking a bit pot-bellied or just not his or her normal self?

If the answer is yes to any of these questions, particularly the recurring laminitis one, and your horse is over 15 years of age, we'd suggest you give us a call so that we can investigate whether Cushing's Disease (also known as *Pituitary Pars*

Intermedia Dysfunction or "PPID") may be to blame.

While many cases of laminitis have previously been thought to have been caused by nutritional issues, there is now a growing body of evidence that suggests that up to 80% of laminitis cases seen in practices like our own could be the result of a hormonal imbalance such as Cushing's Disease - which is why we're starting to talk about it.

A simple blood test could

be all that is needed to diagnose Cushing's and animal health company, Boehringer Ingelheim Vetmedica, has introduced a brand new scheme called **'Talk About Cushing's'** that offers to pay £15 towards the cost of a diagnostic blood test.

We're totally behind this campaign which is being backed by some of the UK's leading equine welfare charities, such British Horse Society (BHS), Redwings Horse Sanctuary and World Horse Welfare (WHW).

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So what is Cushing's Disease?

Equine Cushing's Disease is the most common hormonal disorder of older horses and ponies. We understand that over 15% of horses and ponies over 15 years of age are affected. Combine this with the fact that over 80% of horses suffering from laminitis may have an underlying endocrine disorder like Cushing's Disease, and it is clear why all of a sudden there is an increasing level of interest in the condition. While the condition is more common in older horses and ponies, many still enjoying active lifestyles can be affected.

What causes Cushing's?

The pituitary gland controls a range of important functions including metabolism, reproduction, growth and lactation. As your horse ages, nerves in part of the brain called the hypothalamus undergo progressive degeneration, and produce insufficient quantities of a nerve transmitter called dopamine. Dopamine normally inhibits the production of some hormones from the neighbouring pituitary, so if there is inadequate dopamine production, these hormones tend to be produced in excessive quantities, resulting in the clinical signs associated with Cushing's.

So what are the clinical signs?

We've already mentioned laminitis and hirsutism (abnormal coat), which are two of the most common clinical signs of Cushing's. But there are plenty of others, which are often variable and not necessarily specific to Cushing's, and these include:

- excessive sweating
- increased appetite
- increased drinking and urination
- lethargy/tiredness
- poor performance
- reduced immune function leading to reoccurring skin and respiratory infections including sinusitis, dental disease and an increased susceptibility to worms.
- loss of muscle and a pot-belly
- abnormal deposit of fat around the eye

Diagnosis

As with most conditions, early diagnosis and treatment of horses and ponies affected by Cushing's Disease delivers the best outcome. If you recognise any of the signs, we can carry out a blood test to confirm whether or not Cushing's is the cause.

Treatment and management

Treatment of horses with Cushing's centres on dealing with any immediate medical problems (eg: laminitis cases generally require a combination of pain relief, foot care etc), and then addressing the underlying hormone imbalance.

There is no cure for equine Cushing's Disease, but there is an effective licensed medicine which helps get the hormone secretions back in balance. This helps to reduce the clinical signs associated with the disease - such as any laminitis.

Boehringer Ingelheim's 'Talk About Cushing's' (TAC) campaign

runs throughout November. During the initiative, you can download a £15 money-off voucher from www.talkaboutcushings.co.uk. This can be redeemed through the practice against blood test costs to help diagnose the disease. Call for more information



£15 money
off voucher

Take advantage of our WELL HORSE CLINICS

Want to save money on routine visits? Bring your horse to the clinic on the last Friday of each month to save on a visit charge for your routine vaccination, and take advantage of our stocks for your horses annual dental treatment as well.

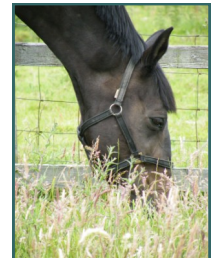
While you are here, your horse can be weighed and our nurses can help with individually tailored nutrition advice as well as advise on worming programmes and anything else you require.

Consultation by pre arranged appointment only — call 01271 879516 or see our Nurse Clinic leaflet.



Clinic Nurses (left to right)
Kirsty, Julie, Claire, Lucy, Jo, Corrina

Confused about how much to feed your horse this winter?



This table gives a basic guide on weight of forage your horse requires over 24 hours.

APPROX. HEIGHT (HH)	APPROX. WEIGHT (KG)	FORAGE PER DAY (KG)	FORAGE PER DAY (LB)
10-11.3	150-200	3-4	6.6-8.8
12-12.3	200-300	4-6	8.8-13.2
13-13.3	300-350	6-7	13.2-15.4
14-14.3	350-450	7-9	15.4-19.8
15-15.3	450-550	9-11	19.8-24.2
16-16.3	550-600	11-12	24.2-26.4
17+	600+	12+	26.4+

A horse turned out by day is likely to consume around 60% of their daily requirements.

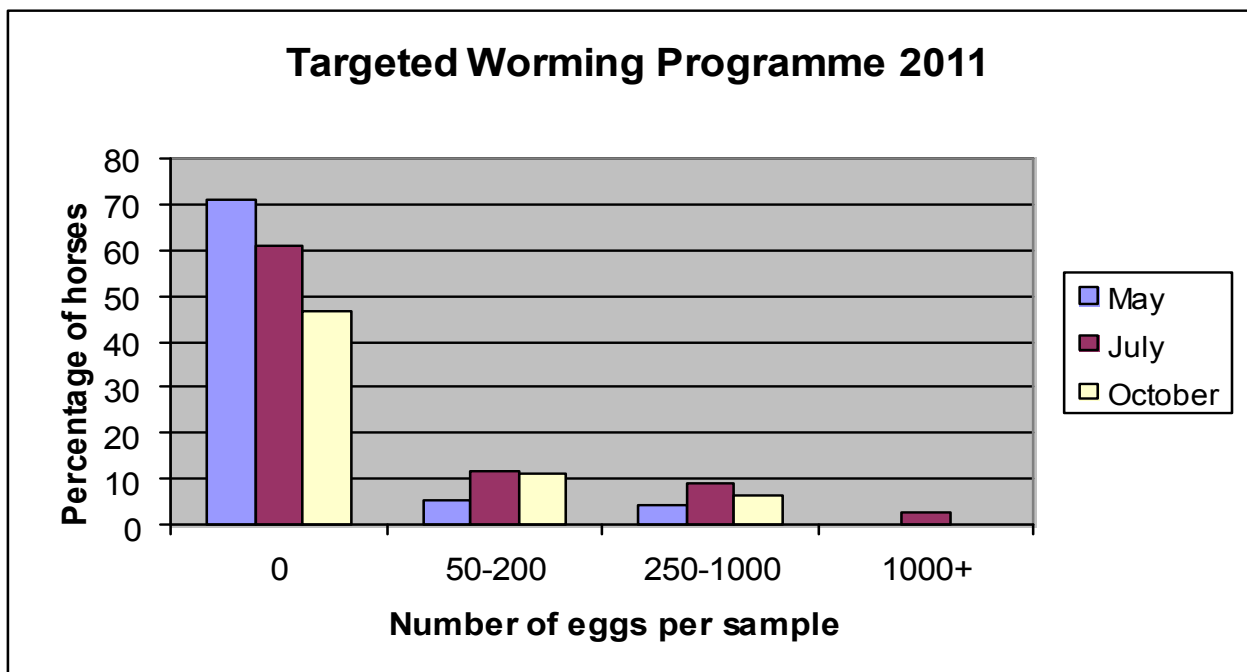
The figures are a guide based on feeding 2% body weight daily, with forage making up 75% of daily ration. Please get in touch on 01271 879516 or email: cberry@chartervets.com for more individual tailored feeding advice.

Targeted Worming Programme

Once again we have had a really successful year with our Targeted Worming Scheme. We have over 100 horses enrolled with numbers continuing to grow. The table below shows the high percentage of horses having either no roundworm burden or less than 200 eggs per gram, which is under the threshold for treatment. As part of the scheme you receive routine treatments through the winter to treat encysted redworm and tapeworm, then 3x worm egg counts through the spring and summer, with treatment only if a burden is detected.

Prices are currently £65.95 per year for an individual horse under 600kg, with discounts available for multiple horses or if you join as a yard.

Please call the equine team or email cberry@chartervets.com for more information or to join.



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