

Mayes & Scrine

Equine Veterinary Practice

Newsletter: March 2007 *Issue 7*

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Practice News

It's been a busy winter. The mild, changeable weather has contributed to a high incidence of mud fever, general infections, wounds and colics. Also, due to the increasing number of indoor venues, competition has continued... and so have the time-consuming lameness investigations.

Frank Low, our Australian vet, has settled in extremely well and we are grateful that he has committed to Mayes & Scrine for the foreseeable future. Laurence "as seen on TV" O'Hara, who left the practice for a surgery scholarship at the Royal Veterinary College, sends his regards to all his adoring "Supervets" fans.

Due to our ever-increasing caseload, and with the eventing, showing and breeding seasons imminent, we are recruiting an additional full-time, experienced veterinary surgeon to the fold. Full details will appear in the next Newsletter and we trust that you will welcome him (or her) when the time comes.

The new Pharmacy in the Equine Barn is almost complete. We intend to add another ward of stables and an additional examination room in the early summer. The new offices will hopefully be ready for next year. Exciting times.

Our **Spring Practice Talk** is upon us.....I hope to see you there! [Ben Mayes](#)



Hurtwood Polo Club

Spring Talk – Monday, 12th March 2007, 7:45pm

The Hurtwood Park Polo Club in Ewhurst, Surrey, has kindly agreed to have us back for our biannual evening meeting. Sandwiches will be available for guests at the clubhouse from 7:30pm, and during the breaks. The bar will be open for liquid refreshment.

Caron Lewis from PetPlan will be talking to us on **Insurance** issues, which should lead to lively debate. Frank Low, our intrepid Antipodean vet, will present his "**Golden Rules for Eyes**", and Judy Scrine will talk on "**Your Horse's Weight**". Please inform the office if you wish to attend and/or you need directions.

Date for your Diary - The Great "Mayes & Scrine" Summer Event

Finally, we've decided to give you some notice for a practice occasion.

The annual, summer celebration at the practice with jazz band for the grown-ups, bouncy castle for the kids, BBQ and exhibition and displays of equipment, case studies etc. will take place on **Sunday 19th August 2007 12:30 to 4:30pm**. We will remind you in the next Newsletter.



Last year's summer event



Essential Nursing, Part One: Poulticing the Equine Foot

There are a plethora of reasons to poultice an equine foot. If you have not yet done so, it is very likely that you will have to one day.

Foot poulticing is a very useful, very common but very traditional procedure and as such everyone has their own way of doing it, all of which are acceptable as long as the foot remains clean and the poultice “draws” or at least “compresses” the diseased area of the foot.

Reasons to poultice a foot

1. Solar bruising
2. Pus-in-the-Foot
3. Gravel (in the white line)
4. Seedy Toe
5. Solar Puncture
6. Nail Bind

A vet, farrier or experienced horse person may advise you to poultice the foot. The technique is used to treat solar bruising, pus-in-the foot, gravel, seedy toe, a solar puncture or a nail bind.



Pus-in-the-Foot prior to Poulticing

This is my way of poulticing:

Step 1

Prepare the foot by cleaning it thoroughly, with a hoof knife or a hoof pick and a stiff brush. Cut away any thrushy frog, brush away excess debris, e.g. with a wire brush, and scrub with dilute antiseptic wash (e.g. with Betadine (povidone iodine) wash). You may have been advised to hot tub the foot before applying the poultice. This involves standing the foot in a plastic bowl or bucket of shallow hand-hot water or deeper bath-warm water with added Epsom Salts, table salt, hydrogen peroxide or Betadine solution (depending on the condition) for approximately five minutes.



Step 1: A “dressed” or cleaned foot. Betadine-soaked swabs have been placed over thrushy frog prior to poulticing.

Step 2

Soak a suitably sized piece of Animalintex in boiling water, a large square for poulticing the

whole foot, a small square for a specific diseased area (e.g. a bruise or abscess). When cool enough to handle, squeeze out the excess water and place the Animalintex, plastic on the outside, over the foot or affected area (beware the boiling water). Place a square of gamgee over the whole foot.



Step 2: Place the Animalintex over the foot or affected area

Step 3

Wrap the foot with Vetrap bandage



FAQ 1: My horse is eating his dung. Is he lacking something in his diet?

Coprophagia is the eating of dung or faeces. It is quite normal for young foals to eat faeces, usually their mother's dung, up to the age of 5 months. It is important in the development of normal gut flora.

However, from time to time we get a worried phone call about an adult horse developing this behaviour. It can appear to start happening suddenly and for no obvious reason.

It is very unlikely that the behaviour starts because of dietary imbalances. Horses can detect salt insufficiency and salt should be supplemented or salt licks made available. However, deficiency in other minerals, vitamins, protein and fibre do not lead to craving behaviour. This does not mean that it is not a good idea to review the

nutrition of a coprophagic horse. Seeking the advice of a nutritionist or vet is always advisable.

It is far more likely that the behaviour relates to a problem or change in the management, i.e. **stress** or **boredom**. The horse may be relatively new to the yard, have a new neighbour (or lost an old one), or be on box rest. The turn out regime may be too limited and this should be discussed with the yard manager. The frequency of feeds or nets may need to be increased or stable toys, e.g. a nut ball, may need to be introduced. Hopefully, attention to these details will eliminate, or at least alleviate, this unpleasant habit.



Poulticing the Equine Foot: continued

Step 4

Wrap the foot with impermeable tape, e.g. duck tape or silage tape.



Materials required for foot poulticing

I normally recommend changing a foot poultice twice a day and hot tubbing once a day. In an uncomplicated case one can usually dry dress (same procedure without soaking the Animalintex) after 3 days and, if the shoe has been removed, replace the shoe a couple of days after that. If you or the farrier are unsure about continuing poulticing or whether the foot is ready to be reshod it is best for the vet to re-examine the foot.

Vaccine Update

The new Strangles vaccine, Equilis Strep E made by Intervet, has been “temporarily” withdrawn from the market.

This is reportedly due to a drop in the antibody levels achieved by the vaccine, i.e. a reduced effectiveness, and not due to safety concerns. Readers of our previous Newsletters know that we have not been advocates of this Strangles vaccine so its withdrawal will have little effect on most of our clients. However, we do vaccinate a few horses in yards where strangles vaccination is the current policy. We can only apologise to the owners of those horses. If and when the vaccine returns, you'll have to start the primary course again.

Our influenza/tetanus vaccination reminder system is 99.9% accurate. We currently send reminder cards a fortnight before the due date as this seems to draw the least “complaints” about the system, although we are looking into reminders by email or text. Most practices avoid equine vaccine reminder systems to avoid the complaints.

Please be aware that, particularly if you compete, it is your responsibility to remember your vaccination due date, pre-empt it and

book an appointment in good time for the vaccination before the due date.

The chairman of the Racecourse Veterinary Association, who is also a partner in a well-respected equine veterinary practice, has just been struck off by the RCVS for backdating the vaccinations for two horses by two weeks. We will not backdate any vaccinations, however trivial the odd day may seem.

FAQ 2: Does chicken feed kill ponies?

Some chicken feed contains coccidiostats. Such chicken feeds can kill your horse or pony and, tragically, we have seen two such cases in the last six months.

Coccidiostats are ionophore chemicals which control the protozoan infectious disease, coccidiosis, of poultry and lambs. An example of such a chemical is monensin. Horses and ponies are **extremely** sensitive to coccidiostats, over 200 times more sensitive than poultry.

The toxic dose is 2mg/kg, or just 400mg for a pony. Many more people are now keeping hens, often near the stables at the back of the house.

If you are such a person, and if there is any chance that your horse or pony can break-in to the feed room, please check that your poultry food does NOT contain a coccidiostat. If it does, seek veterinary advice to ensure that it needs to and don't keep it anywhere that your horse or pony can gain access.

Staff review... new members



Catherine Mayes

The practice is getting busier and busier, on the road (new vet coming soon), in the office and in the clinic. Two new part-time members of the lay staff have joined us to help Jane, Charlie and Claire.

Catherine Mayes (Ben's wife) has joined us to take over bookkeeping duties from the long-suffering Linda

Deslandes and will start to assist Jane with accounts. As Catherine familiarises herself with our bespoke veterinary software system, Teleos, we hope to use the system for more in-depth analysis, e.g. for clinical audit as well as for financial reviews and strategy.

Hopefully Catherine will free up some of Jane and Charlie's time for telephone, reception, diary and call management duties.



Lisa Bray

Meanwhile, Lisa Bray is currently working two days a week in the clinic, assisting Claire with the stables, assisting vets with in-patients, processing x-rays, sterilising equipment and so on. As the clinic expands, with more patients staying overnight and over the weekend, and with the intended extension to seven stables, we may need to recruit even more stable staff!

Breeding at Mayes and Scrine

- the 2007 season

After a successful breeding and A.I. season last year we are preparing for the new season. The spring-like weather means that many of you are making enquiries ready. We are also in the process of becoming a BEVA Approved A.I. Centre. We are hoping to carry out our first Embryo Transfer this year, although this is not a service we are offering commercially yet.

Scanning a mare in the stocks at the clinic



Frozen A.I. must be carried out at the practice as the mare needs to be scanned every four hours. Fees for each cycle/insemination are approximately £550 for chilled A.I. at the clinic, and approximately £700 for frozen A.I. This includes grass livery and two subsequent visits for pregnancy scans. The pregnancy rate for a fertile, young mare should be about 75%

21st Century Breakthru

- Website up at last

Our new websites, www.equinevetpractice.co.uk and www.mayesandscrine.co.uk, are finally up and running, after much cajoling by our IT Adviser, Arnaud Westphal of Centora.

It's early days, but I hope the fact that the website has finally gone live will be inspiration to us to expand it. Already there is up-to-date news on the home page, as well as general information on the practice, the vets and staff, our facilities and equipment, how to find us, and information about various equine veterinary conditions and interesting cases. Back issues of all our newsletters will also be available to download. Links to other interesting web sites will be developed with time. Constructive feedback is always welcome, so please let us know your criticisms – but perhaps remember our job is to look after you and your horse, not Corporate Web Marketing!

Price increases

In last summer's Newsletter (Issue 5) we tabulated our basic fee structure. Due to steadily increasing costs we have put our prices up this year. Essentially we have added £1 (+VAT) to everything, e.g. visits, vaccines, consultation fees. So, a visit and a vaccine has gone up by £2 (+VAT). This equates to an overall price increase of approximately 2.5%, and it is the first price rise for several years. We are continuing to cut down on debt. If you are a slow payer (over 50 days), beware, you may need a new vet soon.