

# Damory Veterinary Clinic

## Equine Newsletter



### Damory Veterinary Clinic

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- New photodynamic laser surgery for horses.
- Dental offer to continue.
- Who has heard of Lawsonia?
- We are looking for equine blood donors.

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### New Laser Surgery For Sarcoids

Removal of sarcoids from certain areas of the body, such as around the eye, can be problematic. In such cases, laser surgery can be used to remove the sarcoid.

This is a relatively new technique which is being used more frequently in appropriate cases and with good results.

It involves using a powerful carbon dioxide laser which is employed with great accuracy to essentially 'burn away' the sarcoid and any tumour cells present in the deeper layers of tissue underneath.

The laser seals the tissue as it goes so there is no

bleeding and a low risk of infection and inflammation post operatively. The added advantage is that minimal aftercare is required.



Laser surgery may be combined with *photodynamic therapy* which involves the use of a light-sensitive cream applied to the site which selectively destroys remaining tumour cells.

Photodynamic therapy with laser surgery is a specialist veterinary procedure. Jeremy Kemp-Symonds is one of a few specialist equine veterinary surgeons who perform the technique.

Recently he removed an extensive sarcoid from near a patient's eye at our equine clinic in Sturminster Marshall. The cosmetic result is excellent and the horse was treated on an outpatient basis, avoiding the need for referral to a distant hospital.

More information about sarcoids is available at:

[www.liv.ac.uk/sarcoids](http://www.liv.ac.uk/sarcoids)

### Dental Offer To Continue In 2012

We are pleased to extend our popular equine dental offer into 2012.

The following discounts are still available for routine equine dentistry:

- **Routine rasp** or burr is **£40**
- **Sedation for dentistry** is a fixed charge of **£15**

- A **discount of 15%** is applied to the visit charge when dentistry is performed
- If **three or more** horses have dentistry performed on a single visit, then there is **no visit charge**

(Additional work such as vaccinations can be per-

formed at the visit)

- There is also **no visit charge** for when dentistry is performed at our **clinic** at Newton Farm in Sturminster Marshall. (All prices include VAT)

We advise having your horses teeth checked at least annually.



## Lawsonia - An Emerging Disease?



Ultrasound scan of small intestine:



We have recently successfully treated a case of Lawsonia in a six month old foal.

Lawsonia is a new disease in horses, although it has been a problem in pigs for many years. It is caused by the bacteria *Lawsonia Intracellularis* which invades the cells lining the small intestine.

Lawsonia is spread by faecal-oral contact and tends to cause clinical signs only in weanlings and immature horses. The bacteria is an obligate intracellular organism, meaning that it survives only inside cells. Once Lawsonia invades it colonises the cells of the small

intestine, causing inflammation and resulting in the small intestine walls becoming so thickened that the horse cannot absorb nutrients. The damaged walls also leak vital proteins into the gut.

The clinical signs of lawsonia are lethargy, inappetence, a high temperature and fluid pooling underneath the abdomen (ventral oedema) which can be quite dramatic. This is due to the loss of vital proteins which maintain the osmotic pressure of the blood and keep the fluid component within the blood vessels. Surprisingly, lawsonia rarely causes diarrhoea.

Lawsonia is diagnosed by abdominal ultrasound to measure the thickness of the small intestine wall, blood tests to confirm the very low protein levels and a faecal sample sent off to a specialist laboratory to test for the presence of the bacteria.

Lawsonia can be treated with a combination of antibiotics targeted directly at the causative bacteria. Supportive care is vital to prevent complications during treatment, good nutrition and fluid therapy maintain the patient's blood flow and a plasma transfusion replaces lost proteins to reduce the ventral oedema.

## Could your horse save a life? - blood and plasma transfusions.



The foal mentioned above recovered successfully thanks in part to a plasma transfusion donated by the owner's other horse. Some patients are not lucky enough to have a suitable stable mate, so we are collecting a list of people with suitable horses who would be willing to donate blood in an emergency.

Horses are lucky in that the first blood or plasma transfusion they receive does not need to be matched in the same way as humans do. However

in order to reduce the risks of complications the ideal donor is:

1. A gelding
2. Over 600kg (to allow us to take enough blood)
3. Healthy and vaccinated
4. Not to have travelled outside of the UK (to reduce the risk of exotic diseases)
5. A suitable temperament to allow collection.

If you think your horse is suitable please contact us by phone or email so we can add you to the data-

base.

Blood collection is painless (a catheter is inserted into the jugular vein using local anaesthetic) and takes about an hour.

The donor will need to have 2-3 weeks off work after collection although we will often take less than the maximum 9litres and most horses do not seem to notice having given blood!

In exchange for donating we are offering a complementary dental check and rasping as needed.