

**Damory Veterinary
Clinic**

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**Special points of
interest in this
issue:**

- Invitation to our Spring equine client evening
- Introducing our new Equine Health Plan
- Advice on colic in Winter
- How to avoid an impaction

Damory Veterinary Clinic Equine Newsletter



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Join us at the Brewery!

Come along and join us on **Wednesday 2nd March** at the **Brewery Visitor Centre** in Blandford for another of our popular client evenings. This time we will focus on:

Sweet-itch and seasonal allergies

There will be three presentations:

'All you need to know about sweet-itch and other summer allergies

'Introduction to *Cavalesse* as a treatment for allergies'

'An overview of the new

Equine Health Plan'

Refreshments will be available from 7pm and the talks will start at 7.30pm.

Everyone is welcome and encouraged to attend. However please do contact the surgery to reserve a place and get directions.

New Equine Health Plan

We have launched our new Equine Health Plan (EHP), which is designed to provide all routine preventative veterinary care for your horse.

The plan includes a **veterinary examination every six months** to help detect problems early on. It is an ideal forum to discuss issues such as diet, dentistry, worming, general health and shoeing.

The clinical examinations check the major organ systems, such as the heart, eyes, mouth, lungs, skin, and limbs.

A **dental examination and treatment** (as required) is performed to ensure comfortable, efficient eating and proper biting. Sedation and the use of motorised burring is included in the plan.

Influenza and tetanus booster vaccinations are administered annually. Horses should have had their primary course prior to enrolment on the plan.



Three faecal samples are collected annually and tested for redworm eggs. The results are used to formulate a personalised worming schedule.

On completion of the examination a **written report** including a **dental chart** and a

weigh tape record will be made for you to keep with your horse's passport.

A 10% discount on all equine veterinary services is applied to your account when you subscribe to the plan. The cost of the plan is spread evenly by a monthly standing order.

The charges are:
£16 per horse per month,
£13 for a second horse per month and
£10 per month, for any additional horses.

Each individual horse registered for the health plan before April 2011, will also be eligible for a **50% reduction in the cost of a microchip.**

Do contact the surgery to discuss how the plan will benefit your horse and should save you money too!

Some causes of colic in the Winter



Colic or abdominal pain is a common equine complaint throughout the year. Most cases are mild, often caused by gut spasm or trapped wind. These normally respond to medication and a short period (8-12 hours) of starvation.

Occasionally the colic is caused by a more serious problem such as a twisted gut. Without major surgery to remove the damaged bowel and re-connect the remaining healthy parts together, the horse will die.

During the Winter there is an increase in the number of horses with colic caused by immature red worm infestations and impactions (constipation).

Immature or larval red worms can cause various problems including colic during the Winter.

The gut wall becomes thickened due to the presence of inflammation around 'hibernating' larvae. When these erupt the horse can suffer from diarrhoea, weight loss and/or colic.

You should include 5 consecutive days of *Panacur Equine Guard* or a single dose of *Equest* in your worming regime to eliminate this particular stage of the red worms.

Impaction colic is also common in the Winter: see article below.

Horses with colic will roll, paw the ground or turn and look at their flanks. Call the surgery immediately if you suspect your horse may have colic.

Preventing impactions

Essentially an impaction is a blockage (partial or complete) of the bowel. It occurs most frequently in the large intestine at one of the 'hair pin bends.' The blocked gut becomes swollen and uncomfortable resulting in signs of colic.

Risk Factors:

- Reduced water consumption
- Poor chewing of roughage feeds due to a sore mouth
- Eating straw bedding
- Tapeworm infestation
- Reduced activity/exercise
- Perineal/rectal pain (e.g. Melanomas around the anus)

Often an owner will notice a reduced number of droppings for a day or so before the horse becomes painful.

Treatment:

Call the vet. Painkillers will be administered for your horse's comfort. Often a drug is used to relax the gut.

Most impactions will pass when treated with large volumes of water and laxatives (such as liquid paraffin) given by stomach tube as below.



More severe cases need hospitalisation for more intensive care such as intravenous fluids.

Prevention:

- Avoid sudden reductions in exercise or complete stable rest.
- Have your horses teeth checked at least annually to ensure comfortable chewing.
- Treat for tapeworms every six months or monitor with a blood test.
- Avoid straw beds for horses spending a large amount of time stabled.
- Encourage drinking when cold: e.g. warm water in mornings with a kettle.
- Ensure water troughs do not freeze up.
- Soak hard feeds to a sloppy mash if your horse is happy to eat it.
- Monitor your horse's droppings.

Tapeworms in the large bowel:

