

Damory Veterinary Clinic

Equine Newsletter



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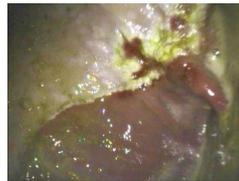
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GASTROINTESTINAL HEALTH FOCUS

GASTRIC AND COLONIC ULCERS

What is a gastrointestinal ulcer?

An ulcer is an erosion in the lining of the gut. They occur most commonly in the stomach or large bowel (the colon).



What signs might you see associated with ulcers?

Commonly recognised signs include:

- changes in attitude
- poor appetite
- decreased performance and energy
- decline in body condition

Others include girth-iness, vices and reluctance to work.

What predisposes to ulcers?

- Long periods without access to forage
- Large grain/processed feed meals
- Limited turnout
- Training, travel, competition and other stressors

Equine Colonic Ulceration — a new era

So what are the causes of colonic ulceration?

As with gastric ulceration the causes are not entirely known.

Some trigger factors include:

- The long term use of **“bute”**
- Irritation associated with **worms**
- **Hindgut acidosis**

However, there are likely many more that we are unaware of as yet.

Maintaining a healthy gut and reducing the risk of colonic ulceration means keeping a horse as close to its natural environment as possible.

The new test for Colonic Ulceration

The new test is the SUCCEED® faecal occult blood test.

It is a simple test requiring only a sample of fresh faeces like for a worm egg count.

The test determines the presence of blood and protein in faeces, which can suggest damage (or ulceration) in the stomach and large bowel.

Historically, it has been difficult to diagnose hindgut ulceration.

The SUCCEED® test is not perfect. You can get false negatives and false positives but it is certainly an important step forward in starting to diagnose at risk horses and then either performing further diagnostics or altering management to try to combat hindgut ulceration.



SEASONAL NEWS

Midges and Flies

The midges and horse-flies have been really bad during this warm weather.

Avoid grazing horses on marshy or boggy ground. Try to utilise any windy areas (top of a hill) where numbers of midges and flies will be reduced.

Fly rugs are invaluable for keeping your horse comfortable.

Deosect is a topical drug useful in the control of flies and lice on horses. It is diluted with water and either sponged on from a bucket or put in a spray



bottle and sprayed over the horse.

Finally if possible avoid dawn and dusk for grazing (the worst time for midges).

Mud Fever

Most mud fever is triggered by wet ground conditions. In the summer increased UV light



can exacerbate skin damage.

Top tips for preventing summer mudfever:

- Use sunblock (eg **SunOff**), especially on the back of pasterns.
- Allow mud to dry and remove with a soft bristled brush to avoid scratching and irritating the skin
- If you wash legs ensure you dry them thoroughly immediately after.
- Clipping out thick, hairy feathers that trap moisture creating a perfect environment for bacteria to thrive.

STAFF NEWS

Welcome to Lizzie

Lizzie joined Damory Equine at the beginning of May and is settling in rapidly. She is enjoying meeting all the clients and exploring the beautiful Dorset countryside. She is interested in all aspects of equine practice and enjoys do-

ing dentistry, treating wounds, medical cases, and lame horses: Whatever a day may throw at her!



Gemma Falck has not returned to Damory after her maternity leave and she is now expecting another baby.

We all wish her, her husband and her growing family many congratulations and wish them well.

We all wish you a safe and successful summer out on your horses and ponies!