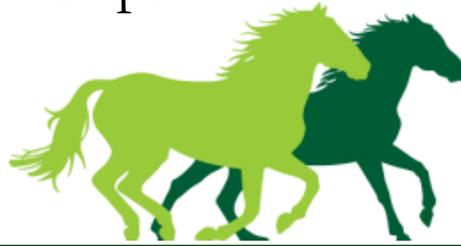


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Mudfever



Mudfever is a skin complaint seen on the lower limbs, particularly on pink skin. It is more common during wet conditions. The telltale signs are **crusts** and **scabs** (see picture above). The affected leg is usually swollen and sore. The disease, also known as 'pastern dermatitis' or 'grease heel' is actually the end result of a number of factors, rather than a simple infection.

Chronic wetting of the skin (muddy fields), minor trauma and rubbing (eg. against boots) and humid conditions all encourage bacteria on the skin and in the soil to flourish. Therefore the triggers need to be controlled as well as antibiotic treatment. Otherwise recurrence is common.

Although well feathered legs can provide protection from mudfever, once the leg is inflamed most cases benefit from having the **hair clipped away**. Sometimes this can be very painful, requiring sedation.

If the pasture is muddy or wet (ie. most of the time!) then **stabling onto clean dry shavings** is vital. Support bandages are required as these legs tend to fill when standing in.

It is important to **remove scabs and crusts**, even if it makes the leg bleed. Otherwise any creams or ointments cannot reach the target area. If the scabs are very hard then poulticing can assist their removal.

The wounds can then be carefully cleaned with dilute **hibiscrub** twice daily. After gentle drying, an antibiotic ointment is applied. **Flamazine** is one preparation we use, as well as compounding our own '**mudfever ointment**.' Very severe cases, particularly when the leg is swollen require antibiotics in the feed or as injections.

Finally there are conditions, such as ringworm which may look like classic mudfever but do not resolve with just antibiotics. Some simple diagnostic tests may be helpful to detect the underlying problem.

Therefore if you are doing all the correct things and the skin is not healing satisfactorily, it is worth contacting us at the surgery. Frequently a visit and examination is helpful for individual advice.

