



Vaccination Amnesty March 2012



This March we will be running the vaccine amnesty again. The deal is the same as in previous years, any horse starting or re-starting their course of vaccinations, having the first dose administered during March, gets the second dose FREE.

This effectively means that re-starting a lapsed or out-of-date vaccination course can be done for the same price as an annual booster.

The offer applies to any of the standard vaccination protocols involving Influenza and Tetanus, ie. Influenza only, Influenza and Tetanus combined or just Tetanus alone.

The Amnesty has been very popular each year so get your horse booked in during the month of March to ensure you don't miss out on this great offer.

The offer relates only to the cost of the vaccinations, visit fees still apply, but horses can be brought to the clinic for vaccinations, thereby avoiding visit costs, appointments are required to ensure a vet is available.

Another way of avoiding visit fees is by arranging five or more horses requiring teeth rasping at the same premises at the same time, we waive the visit fee when five or more horses are booked in at the same place on the same day for teeth

News from Stirk and Associates by Simon Stirk

It is now approaching 12 months since we merged with Minster and, as a result of my forced absence for some time through illness, the Minster vets have probably found that they are more familiar with Ripon and the Yorkshire Dales than they had reckoned on.

As anticipated, the main benefit to our clients of us being part of a much bigger practice has been in taking advantage of the specialist interests: Mark Collins, who already knew our trainers has spent time in the yards and arranged a number of "overground scoping" sessions which have been invaluable in accurately diagnosing and formulating

treatments for horses with wind problems.

The easy and prompt access to the surgical team and being able to discuss cases and x-rays with surgeons at Minster has also been of great benefit to our clients.

We were sad to lose Emily Pearson, who has moved on to the Royal Veterinary College and at present are in the process of recruiting an experienced vet for our side of the practice. We are also being ably assisted by Gemma Dransfield who has taken over a lot of Emily's work and has been received very well by our clients.

Gemma's special interest is stud Medicine and she will be pleased to advise on any aspect of breeding, including AI and embryo transplant.

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Success in RSPCA Cruelty Case Prosecution

In June 2010 the RSPCA were called to two yearlings in a stable, by the Police who were concerned by the lack of food and water in the stable and by the poor condition of the two horses. The RSPCA inspector, Gill Corder, had a film crew from Animal 24/7 with her at that time and as a result some may have seen the case featured as part of the programme broadcast on channel 5.

Julian Rishworth, was the Vet who attended on that day in June and as those who saw the programme will already know, the yearlings were seized by the Police and after initial treatment and checks at the clinic, they were taken to a place of safety.

There were no signs of significant disease, just the effects of dehydration and malnourishment. The yearlings had their terribly over-grown feet trimmed by Farrier Craig McNeil, our nurses groomed all the retained winter coat out and free access to water and sensible

feeding meant they were re-hydrated and fit to move to the place of safety within a couple of days. Blood tests showed extremely high levels of antibodies to Tapeworms, so treatment for Tapeworms was given, otherwise the yearlings were turned out to grass and treated like normal yearlings. The improvement in their condition was remarkable.

The owner of the horses was prosecuted by the RSPCA and the trial took place in December. Julian and Craig McNeil were both involved in the trial and the result of the trial was that the owner was found guilty of all 5 charges which included a mix of offences under section 4 of the Animal Welfare act (causing unnecessary suffering) and section 9, failing to meet the needs of the animal. Sentencing will be passed at the end of January.

The practice has supported the RSPCA on many such cruelty cases in the past, involving all species, not just horses, and will continue to do so when required in the future. As vets,

the welfare of horses is at the centre of everything we do and fortunately the vast majority of horse owners feel the same way. In an awful lot of cases owners don't intend to be cruel or cause unnecessary suffering, often circumstances get on top of them, they bury their heads in the sand and fail to call for help, especially veterinary assistance, in time.

The important lesson is not to ignore the problem, don't be afraid to call for help and do so as soon as possible.



www.rspca-yorkhome.co.uk

National Cruelty Line

Tel: 0300 1234 999

Talking Horse Health Seminars



Askham Bryan College Conference Hall

28th February at 7.30pm

Subject: Respiratory Diseases

Topics discussed: STRANGLES, Infuenza, Herpes Virus and Emerging diseases from abroad

Places are **FREE** but you will need to book a place by emailing

poppleton@minstervets.co.uk

What to do next if breeding from your mare in 2012

The stud season is almost upon us again in 2012 with the arrival of our first foals already overdue. Anyone thinking of breeding from their mare should start thinking about the stallion they would like to use and in non thoroughbred populations, the method of breeding they would like to use (AI or natural covering). At the Minster Equine Clinic and Stirk and Associates we have very experienced stud vets that have worked in both the UK and abroad, who can carry out all assisted reproductive techniques including artificial insemination with chilled and frozen semen and embryo transfer. Insemination with chilled semen can be carried out at home which can mean that your mare never has to leave your premises. However, those mares requiring more intensive monitoring, such as in frozen AI and embryo transfer are admitted to the equine clinic in York where scans and procedures can be carried out as and when required

First of all you need to decide which stallion you would like to breed your mare with. The choice of stallion may determine the method of breeding (natural cover or AI). For natural covering the mare may have to reside at the same stud as the stallion or the mare can be 'walked-in' to the stud, covered and return home the same day. If AI is the method of choice then a decision should be made on the type of semen to use; chilled or frozen. Most studs will provide chilled semen, however, not all studs have the facilities to process and freeze semen. The York clinic is a British Equine Veterinary Association (BEVA) approved AI centre where we have the facilities and expertise to store and thaw frozen semen and carry out various AI techniques.

Initially, a breeding soundness examination is performed to ensure the mare is in good health with the correct vulval confirmation and no abnormalities on her ovaries, in her uterus or cervix. A clitoral swab for contagious equine metritis (CEM) and a blood sample for equine viral arteritis (EVA) are taken to ensure the mare is disease free. The ultrasonographic examination allows us to assess the stage of the mare's reproductive cycle and if she is close to coming 'into season'. If the mare is not in season she may be injected with prostaglandin (PG) to encourage her to do so. Once the mare is in season we can closely monitor her ovaries and uterus by ultrasonography to determine the best time to cover or inseminate her. The mare is scanned for pregnancy 15 days after she has ovulated and if she is in-foal will be further scanned at 28 days and 42 days post ovulation to ensure the foal is healthy.

Fixed packages are available for AI with both chilled and frozen semen. If you considering breeding from your mare and require any further advice or information about AI please visit our website or contact one of our stud vets (Mark, Julian, Charlie at the Minster Equine Clinic on 01904 788840 or Gemma at Stirk & Associates on 01765 690245).

Worm control in your horse

However you approach the problem of worm control in your horse, Minster Vets makes sure that you get the best value for money.

We encourage the use of faecal worm egg counts to find the horses that have significant worm burdens so that only those horses that need worming treatment, get treated. This also means that worming treatments are not wasted on horses that don't need treating.

We are continuing our 2 for 1 offer on worm egg counts throughout 2012.

Testing your horse's droppings every two months during the grazing season (March to October) and only treating horses with worm egg counts greater than 200 eggs per gram is the best way. Whatever happens during the grazing season, every horse should be treated for tapeworms at least once a year and for encysted redworm (cyathostomes) once a year, both these are best done in the autumn.

For those horses with positive worm egg counts (> 200 eggs/gram or even >400 eggs/ gram for mature horses/ponies 5 -15 years old) the product used to treat should be rotated on an annual basis and all horses on the same property needing treatment should be treated with the same product.

Prevention is always better than the cure, clearing droppings from the paddock removes the worm eggs which will hatch and release larvae onto the pasture that can re-infect the horse. Clearing droppings upto once per fortnight can still be effective so for those with less time it will still be worth the effort. Twice a week is pretty much ideal but the tighter the stocking density the more frequently droppings should be cleared.

Our competitive wormer prices are:

Noromectin (active ingredient Ivermectin) £5.00
Embotape (active ingredient Pyrantel) £5.00
Equest (active ingredient Moxidectin) £11.58
Equest Pramox (active ingredient Moxidectin & Praziquantel) £15

These prices include VAT and are for payment at the time of purchase, if placed on account, higher prices will be charged.

New practice computer system

Only this week, a client who was having a good old spring clean and clear out, presented me with some accounts that had been sent out by the practice in the 1980's. Hand written, on small sheets with additional notes drawing attention to the change of practice address to, the then new, Salisbury Road site. Quaint as it was, it brought back memories of the ledger, into which all calls were entered, each with a space left for the relevant Vet to fill in the details of the call, later. Often there would be a queue of vets, patiently (or not) awaiting their turn to get access to the Ledger and write up their visits.

In 1995 the practice took the bold step into the computer age and installed a practice management system, out went the laborious hand- written accounts, now animal records could be accessed at all the branch surgeries, accounts were printed out at the end of each month. It was a difficult decision at the time, trying to choose the right system to suit all aspects of the practice and the process of introduction was not without its difficulties. However, it would appear that the decision can't have been that bad, as that system has been in place for 17 years.

That system has now really come to the end of its useful life and the practice has effectively out-grown its capabilities. When we installed the system in 1995 it served 10 vets working from three sites and over the last 17 years it has witnessed growth to now, where we have 35 vets working from 13 sites. After a long and difficult process we have selected the new system and the change over is due to take place on 1st February 2012.

Whatever the benefits, change is always difficult for everyone concerned. All client and patient information will be transferred onto the new system so no-one need worry that their animal's history will be lost. The new system will have improved and more modern capabilities, allowing much easier access to patient information, such as X-Rays, ultrasound scans, blood results alongside clinical notes. Other exciting functions and features will be rolled out in the near future.

We know that there will be some teething issues and just as our staff will find it difficult initially to get used to a very different system and you will notice a different layout to the monthly bills (most people will welcome this). Please bear with us in the early stages of this change-over, the benefits will be worth it when its fully up and running but initially it may take slightly longer to make appointments and deal with enquiries so please be patient with the reception staff.

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