



Dick Vet Equine Practice Newsletter - *SPRING 2009*

This year has got off to a flying start (must be getting older) and suddenly Spring has sprung and mares and staff are producing babies!!

But before we get to that good news, have you noticed our new name? We are now known as THE DICK VET EQUINE PRACTICE (or DVEP for short). Along with a new name we have added some fantastic new services. See below for more information.

Reduced Referral Fees for DVEP Clients

Occasionally, your horse may require referral to a specialist at the Dick Vet Equine Hospital (DVEH) at Easter Bush. We are pleased to announce that DVEP clients now benefit from a 25% reduction in the cost of the consultation fee for both routine and emergency referrals. Additionally, if an out of hours visit by the DVEP results in emergency referral to the DVEH, the DVEP emergency call out fee will be waived.

Evening Appointments on Trial!

Would you prefer to make an evening appointment for routine calls such as vaccinations, dental treatments or bandage changes? Over the summer we are trialing an evening appointment system on Tuesdays. Routine appointments can be booked up until 8pm for a 25% surcharge on top our normal visit fee (£37.50 instead of £30). To ask about this service, or to make an appointment, call our receptionists Ali and Trish on 0131 445 4468.

Passport update! IMPORTANT PLEASE READ

Horse passport legislation is being updated this year., with the major change being that (with few exceptions) **foals** (and all horses not previously issued with passports) registered from **1st July 2009 must be implanted with a microchip** containing a unique code. Contact us for more information and offers regarding this update.

NEW STAFF



Some of you will already have met Chris Elliott who is helping us out during Jenny's maternity leave. Chris is from Brisbane, Australia and, despite needing to wear thermals everyday, says he is thoroughly enjoying working in Scotland!

What's in this months newsletter:

1. News
2. New Staff
3. New equipment
4. Foaling information

BABY NEWS!!

Congratulations to Jenny and Dylan Clements on the birth of their baby girl, Sian Marie Clements! Both mother and baby are both doing very well and Sian has already made her first visit to the Dick Vet Equine Practice. Jenny will be back with us in October.





Congratulations to Kirstie!



Congratulations to Kirstie Pickles who became a Diplomate of the European College of Equine Internal Medicine in March 2009. The examination process was a three day ordeal held in Barcelona in January. Despite gale force winds causing evacuation of the exam building during an exam, power cuts and revising by candle light, Kirstie survived the experience and can now proudly call herself a European specialist in equine medicine. For those of you who have not yet met her, Kirstie joined the practice last year.

NATIONAL VACCINATION MONTH JUNE 2009 !!

Vaccination offer:

Everyone agrees on the importance of vaccinating your horse against disease. Any unvaccinated horse over 1 year old, or any horse that is more than 3 months overdue for its booster is eligible, during the month of June to receive the second dose of a primary vaccination course against tetanus or flu/tetanus free of charge! All you have to pay for is the visit fee. This will give you a huge saving over the regular price!



To participate in this cost saving offer please contact for more information and be sure to mention National Vaccination Month!

Straight from the Horse's Mouth: Update on Dentistry at DVEP

The DVEP has recently acquired 2 new pieces of motorised dental equipment, including one of only two *Flexi-Float Ultra* units in the UK. This instrument is a battery powered float with a flexible, rotating, water-cooled head that can be adjusted to reach all areas of the mouth to safely correct major dental abnormalities. The DVEP recommends that horses should have their teeth examined at least once a year. Older horses, or horses with major abnormalities, such as displaced, fractured or absent teeth, will require more frequent dental attention (usually twice yearly). The dental examination should be performed by a vet or a qualified equine dental technician (EDT) affiliated to the British Association of Equine Dental Technicians (BAEDT). These EDTs are endorsed by the British Equine Veterinary Association (BEVA). By law, EDTs are not allowed to sedate horses. The DVEP is able to sedate horses for members of the BAEDT, however we are unable to sedate for non-BAEDT accredited EDTs, as their level of training and competence is unknown. A list of qualified EDTs can be found on the BEVA website (www.beva.org.uk).



The Foaling Mare

Most mares (>95%) will give birth without complication if left unattended, however some feel that this is an expensive gamble and try and be there at the time of delivery. However, this can be more difficult than expected. Mares give birth 'explosively'!!! It can all be over in fifteen minutes or so!

Preparations for Foaling

Ideally, mares should be placed in the foaling environment 2 to 3 weeks prior to her expected foaling date as any sudden changes may delay foaling.

Mares can foal in a variety of locations, depending on the weather and facilities available. Whatever the choice of foaling locations, the environment should be clean, have adequate space, and be reasonably quiet. Mares due to foal in the cooler months will require a large (14' X 14' minimum), clean foaling stall. During warm weather, many producers choose to allow their mares to foal in grassy paddocks or pastures.

The mare should be allowed ample exercise up to foaling. Stall confinement for an extended period just prior to foaling may predispose the mare to impaction colic and abnormal swelling.

Early in gestation, some mares may have had a 'Caslicks' operation to partially suture together the lips of the vulva. Mares that have a Caslicks must have the lips of the vulva opened at least 14-28 days prior to foaling!

The average gestation length (duration of pregnancy) of mares is 335 to 340 days, but can range from 320 to 370 days.

Early Signs

The classical signs of approaching parturition include udder development beginning 2 to 6 weeks before foaling, then milk let down into the teats (teat distension) 4-6 days prior to parturition. The ends of the teats become covered with a yellow 'crust' and the mare is said to be "waxing", which occurs 1-2 days before foaling. At this time, some mares will have occasional dripping or streaming of colostrum. If this streaming is continuous and significant, the colostrum should be collected and stored for possible use with the new born foal (in clean container and then freeze).



Parturition-Stage I

Parturition is typically broken down into three stages. Stage I, normally lasting 1 to 4 hours, reflects the initial uterine contractions and final positioning of the foal for delivery. Typically the mare will exhibit the following behaviour:

Restlessness, Pawing the bedding or ground, Getting up and down frequently, Sweating in the flanks, Urinating frequently.

During stage 1, the mare can be prepared for foaling, if desired. This could include washing the mare's vulva and udder with warm water and wrapping her tail with a clean bandage.

Parturition-Stage II

This is when the foal actually appears. If foaling is proceeding normally, the mare should be left to do it on her own. What is normal? This second stage, hard labour and foal delivery is usually completed in 10 to 30 minutes. Stage II ends following birth when the umbilical cord is broken as the mare



stands or foal struggles. To avoid infection, dip the stump of the umbilical cord in Iodine solution or Chlorhexidine solution. We have a prepared solution for you so just come in and pick some up. Repeat the process several times during the first few days of life. This will help prevent bacteria invading the body via the navel stump (navel-ill), which can lead to serious complications, such as neonatal septicaemia and septic arthritis.

Parturition-Stage III

The final stage of parturition, Stage III, is the delivery of the placenta (afterbirth). These membranes, which surround the foal during gestation, should be expelled **3 to 4 hours** after delivery. Once expelled, the placenta should be examined to determine if it is intact or if any portions may have been detached. Placenta retention can be a problem, leading to uterine infection and/or laminitis (founder). If your mare has not expelled her placenta by around 5-6 hours then call your vet. After foaling, the foal should stand and nurse within 2 hours. Colostrum intake is very important and it is essential that the foal drinks at least 1-2 litres of milk in the first 8 hours of life. If the foal has had a few drinks and then lays down with a full tummy then you know he is fine.

Time After Birth	Foal's Coordination
Within minutes	Foal should right it self and sit up on chest.
15min-1 hour	Tries to stand
1-2 hours	Standing and starting to suck
Within 4 hours	Passed meconium
Within 8 hours	Had multiple good feeds of milk
Within 24 hours	Checked over by vet

Remember

We like to check foals and the mares placenta the next morning. So keep all the membranes to show the vet.

Normal opening hours are:
Monday to Friday 8.30am-5pm
During these times please phone:
0131 445 4468
At all other times please phone:
01223 849 835
If you call during after hours, you will be asked for your name, contact details and the nature of the problem.
This information will be passed to the duty vet who will contact you directly.

