



WENSUM VALLEY VETS NEWSLETTER

Heat Stroke/stress

Signs include:

- Excessive sweating
- Rapid breathing
- Elevated heart rate
- Behavioural changes (dull/ listless or manic)

How you can help:

Exercise - Avoid intense or prolonged exercise. Cool down with large amounts of cold water, this doesn't need scraping off

Water and shade - Ensure constant access to both. Remember to also offer plain water if offering electrolyte water, as many horses choose not to drink it!

Consider clipping - especially thick coated, overweight, heavily exercised and horses suffering from Cushing's

Travelling - Avoid travelling where possible, especially at the hottest part of the day, ventilate trailers well.



Breathing Problems

This summer's hot and dry weather won't have gone unnoticed by many, especially horse owners, where the soaring temperatures can bring a new set of concerns. The heat and dust can exacerbate breathing problems, particularly equine asthma.

In general equine breathing problems can be due to either allergy (such as pollen, dust, hay or other environmental allergens) or infection (bacterial or viral).





Staff profile - Lauren

By now many of you may have met Lauren, who joined our team this July with a keen interest in all things equine and farm medicine. Lauren spent a lot of time in Norfolk when she was growing up, and saw practice at Wensum Valley as a student, getting involved in horse castrates, routine dentistry and a variety of farm visits too. Since joining the team she has enjoyed meeting our lovely clients and getting to know new areas of the county on her visits.

Outside of the practice, Lauren can often be found cycling to the coast or swimming in the sea.



What is Equine Asthma?

Equine asthma is a broad term encompassing all inflammatory diseases of the equine lower airways. In the past names have included heaves, COPD and RAO.

What can we do?

To determine the cause of their breathing problems a vet will examine them and then a 'scope' may be needed. This involves coming to the practice for a camera (endoscope) to be inserted into your horse's airway, via their nose, to examine the airways, assess for inflammation, mucus and blood, and take samples. The two main samples used are called:

- Tracheal Wash - fluid is introduced to the windpipe to collect mucus and cells from the surface, it is immediately collected and sent for analysis
- Broncho-alveolar Lavage (BAL) - fluid is introduced into the lower airways (bronchi) and the alveoli to take a second sample for analysis.

Based on the results of these tests, we are able to differentiate between inflammation and infection in the lungs gaining a greater clinical picture of the cause of the breathing difficulties in order to tailor our treatment. A range of treatment options such as medication added to feed, or administered via a nebuliser are available.

