



WENSUM VALLEY VETS NEWSLETTER

Our Targeted Worming Scheme

Our worming scheme offers fantastic value, for only £65 per year, you will receive:

- 4 worm egg counts (WECs)
- 1 tapeworm saliva test (to be done between November and February)
- 10% discount on any wormers required
- 1 faecal egg count reduction test (FECRT)
- Unlimited worming advice by phone

The worming scheme could save you more than £44 per year!

Please speak to your vet at their next visit or call our office on 01328 864444 if you are interested in joining.



Wensum Valley Vets



Breathing Problems

This summer's variable weather won't have gone unnoticed by the equine community. Heat and dust can exacerbate breathing problems (particularly Equine Asthma), as can sudden changes in temperature and humidity. The factors which cause breathing problems will vary for individual horses. With Winter approaching some horses find the change in management towards more time in the stable challenging.

In general, equine breathing problems can be due to either allergy (such as pollen, dust, hay or other environmental



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allergens) or infection (bacterial or viral). There are other respiratory issues but these are much rarer.

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. It is important to investigate breathing changes such as increased breathing effort, increased nostril flare, nasal discharge, abnormal breathing during exercise and respiratory noise to find the cause and keep your horse comfortable.

Diagnosis

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. This is very well tolerated under light sedation. 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.
- We will sometimes take blood for analysis too.



Treatment

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 to tailor our treatment. A range of treatment options such as medication added to feed, or administered via a nebuliser are available. For a bacterial infection this involves antibiotics, alongside supportive care such as medications to reduce inflammation and dilate (widen) the airways, easing breathing.

Environmental management is key to managing Equine Asthma. The initial treatment usually involves steroid tablets in feed, possibly progressing to the use of a nebuliser which is suitable for long term management.

