

Wright & Morten Equine Newsletter



www.wmvets.co.uk

October 2021

Prime Time MOT

The Prime Time MOT is aimed at horses and ponies who are 12+ years old and performing a job, whether that be eventing or light hacking, that require a little extra maintenance to keep them in their prime. They might be a little stiff, slowing down, struggling to maintain condition or have a persistent cough.

The Prime Time MOT includes:

- Visit to your yard
- Thorough general health check
- Heart and lung auscultation
- Lameness examination (on the straight and lunge)
- Discussion of dental care, hoof care and nutrition. Dental examination and treatment will not be performed on the day, but can be arranged at an extra cost on a dental zone day if deemed appropriate.
- Worm egg count

We are extending this offer throughout October for £60.



Gastroscope Clinic October

There is still time to book on the gastroscope clinic running in October.



This is a fantastic opportunity to look into any niggles and concerns in a cost effective way.

For just £75 we are offering a full clinical examination, gait analysis, gastroscope including sedation, weight check and nutrition consultation, examination of both eyes and a dental examination (any treatment required, and teeth rasping will be at an additional cost)

This offer is on for the last week in September and first 3 weeks of October.



All clinics will take place at our clinic here at Somerford Park Farm.

Please contact the office on 01260 280800 to book a place.



What3words?

As the nights are drawing in, and its getting darker, it is really useful for us to know your location of your horse via What3Words. This will help us to get to you more quickly, especially in an emergency.

What3words is an App that has given every 3m square in the world a unique 3 word address. It will help us find your horse's exact location much faster. For example, our Somerford Equine Clinic reception window is "influencing.gradually.rungs".

Our vets now have what3words on their phones, and we would like you to use it too. Please, where possible can you provide us with the unique three words for your horse's stable? We are really confident that this will speed up our journey times and mean we can spend more time with you and your horse!

To rug or not to rug...

It's that time of year when it's warm during the day but going off quite cool at night. This puts us in a difficult situation with management, specifically with regards to rugging. We find ourselves grabbing an extra jumper or jacket when we pop to the yard- but does this mean we should start putting some layers on our horses too?

When we feel colder it's easy to think our horses must be colder and therefore need a rug. However, with the fluctuating temperatures this can lead to horses overheating which causes a short-term welfare issue. In the long term, over-rugging can actually be detrimental to their health- horses naturally lose weight in the winter and this is actually a good thing to reduce their risk of laminitis the following spring.

Horses have evolved to maintain their body temperature through a mechanism called thermoregulation- domestic horses have the same in built mechanism as wild horses! In normal conditions the healthy horse is able to maintain its core body temperature at a static state of approximately 38 degrees, irrespective of the surrounding conditions. Think of the cold nights where your horse has access to a stable/field shelter but chooses to stay out in the wet and wind! When temperatures drop below zero degrees horses are able to divert their blood flow to their internal organs to keep them warm. Therefore assessing how cold your horses' ears and legs feel is a poor indicator of how warm your horse is!

It's also important to remember that being stabled increases the environmental temperature that the horse or pony is exposed to. So the weight of rug needed for during periods of stabling may need to be

lighter than the turnout weight.

Below is a basic guide to suggested weight of rug required for turnout depending on whether the horse is clipped or unclipped.

Temperature	Clipped Stabled Horse	Unclipped Stabled Horse	Clipped Turned out	Unclipped Turned out
10 to 15 degrees	Light weight or zero fill (100g)	Nothing or zero fill	Nothing or Light weight (100g) or zero fill	Nothing
5 to 10 degrees	Light weight to medium weight rug (150-250g)	Light weight (150g)	Light weight plus neck cover (150g)	Nothing or light weight (100g)
Zero to four degrees	Medium weight to heavy weight rug (250-300g)	Medium weight (200g)	Medium weight with neck cover (200g)	Lightweight or medium weight (150-250g)
Zero to minus 10 degrees	Heavy weight rug with neck (300-400g)	Medium weight with neck or liner (200-300g)	Heavy weight with neck cover +/- liner (300-400g + liner)	Light or medium weight with neck cover (150-300g)
Less than minus 10 degrees	Heavy weight with liner/ under rug and neck (500g)	Heavy weight + neck (300-400g)	Heavy weight with liner and neck + hood (300-500g + liner)	Heavy weight and neck (300-400g)

Acorn Poisoning

It's that time of year where there are lots of acorns on the ground. If eaten, acorns, leaves and branches from oak trees pose a risk of poisoning to horses. Fortunately, acorn poisoning is rare in horses, but it does have years where an increase is seen, potentially due to the increased crop of acorns. So, it is important to know what we can do for our horses to minimise the risk.



It is fairly common knowledge that acorns are poisonous to horses (cattle and dogs too) They contain a substance called "tannic acid" which when eaten in sufficient quantity (this may be different for each individual horse) the tannins can cause liver and kidney damage, droppings containing blood, colic and diarrhoea. It is rare that acorn poisoning happens as acorns are bitter tasting, so they tend not to eat them, however, there is an increased risk of horses eating them if pasture is poor and there is little availability of good quality forage. It is important to remember that some horses, regardless of taste, quality of grazing or even extra forage, will seek out acorns. Anecdotally, some may even develop a liking for them, and become almost "addictive", although there is no scientific evidence of this.

Greatest risk areas are

- Some horses are naturally more susceptible to acorn poisoning, a small amount may make them ill.
- Overgrazed paddocks or long hot summers reducing grazing quality increase the chance of horses eating acorns.
- An increase in acorn fall after strong winds or storms.

Ways to reduce risk

Avoid using the field until the acorns can be raked or removed from

the ground. If this is not an option, provide good quality forage away from the oak trees to reduce the likelihood that the horses will eat them. Alternatively, set up electric fencing around the tree, including its branches so that the horses cannot get to the acorns.

Signs of acorn Poisoning

Some horses will have a higher level of tolerance to acorns and will show no symptoms at all. Others may eat just a few and become sick. Signs include:

- Acorn husks in droppings
- Depression
- Dehydration
- Lethargy, not moving around as much as normal
- Reduced appetite
- Increased lying down
- Colic
- Diarrhoea containing blood
- Constipation
- Mouth ulcers


Treatments

There is no specific treatment for acorn poisoning and the care given to your horse will depend on the number of acorns eaten, and the stage of illness. Intravenous fluids will help wash out the toxins and prevent further damage to the organs. To stop damage in the intestines activated charcoal, mineral oil or paraffin may be administered by your vet. Pain killers may be given if the horse has colic symptoms but encouraging the horse to eat hay and drink water will also help dilute the toxins.

If you suspect your horse may have eaten acorns, leaves or parts of the tree call us immediately and we will be able to advise the best course of action for your horse.

EQUINE CLINIC

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