



Newsletter
Spring 2009

Equine EXPRESS

Shotter & Byers Equine Veterinary Services

Equine Passports

Microchips required from July 1st 2009



The new regulation builds on the existing system, the main change being the requirement for the horse to be microchipped and the number recorded on the passport. A passport will not be issued without a

microchip number on the application.

A tiny microchip with its own unique code number - the size of a grain of rice - is inserted with a needle under the animal's skin on the neck. Once in, the microchip cannot move or be seen, but can be read by a scanner. This information is then stored on a database along with your horse's number. In any situation where the horse

needs to be identified the database can be contacted and your details retrieved.

In light of these new regulations we would like to pass on a special offer to our clients:

OFFER PRICE - £25.00/horse
No charge visit fee if we see 4 or more horses

Contact the office on:
01483 274905 to order or ask your vet for details.

Valid for April – August 2009
normally £35.00 (prices incl. vat)



Spring Talk 2009

Wednesday April 22nd 2009 7:00 pm

Cranleigh Village Hall

36 High Street Cranleigh Surrey GU6 8AF

“Breeding At Home - What to Expect!”

Speaker: Michael Byers BVSc, MRCVS

“Maintaining Healthy Joints”

Speaker: Kirsty Sturman BSc (Hons) Equine Science

“Horse Pasture Management”

Speaker: Nicky West - Equestrian & Rights of Way Officer

Managing Your Pregnant Mare and Her Foal

As the day approaches for your mare to give birth to her foal, preparations should be made to create a warm and healthy environment. About 30 days prior to foaling, introduce the mare to the stall where she will foal, this allows her to produce protective antibodies against the microorganisms in the environment. She will then be able to pass these antibodies on to her foal in the colostrum.

Contacting your veterinarian a few days before your mare is expected to foal is advisable. A few signs that your mare is ready to foal include the following:

- **Enlarging of udder with "waxed beads" of colostrum.**
- **Frequent urination.**
- **Swelling and relaxing of the vulva.**
- **Relaxed croup muscles, producing a sunken appearance over the hips.**
- **Mare can become restless and start to sweat.**



FOALING

In stage one, the mare is restless. This may continue for 12 to 24 hours. During this period, the foetus is positioned for delivery and the cervix is dilated. The water bag ruptures at this stage which lubricates the birth canal and aides in delivery of the foal.

Stage two, the actual birth or hard labour. It is usually rapid, with most foals born in 20 to 30 minutes. Normally the foal's front feet appear first, with heels pointed down toward the mare's hocks. The foal's hind feet usually remain in the mare 5 to 15 minutes after foaling, while the foal and mare lie resting. In a normal delivery, the foal's nose should be lying on or about the knees. One front leg usually is slightly forward of the other, speeding the foal's movement through the birth canal. After the head exits the vulva, you may see a clear, transparent membrane, which covers the legs and head. If this membrane does not rupture and free the foal's head, open it and free the head so the foal can breathe. It's best not to disturb them while the umbilical cord is still connected.

Premature breaking of the umbilical cord by the mare, foal, or human intervention may result in a loss of very important fetal blood supply.

In stage three, the uterus shrinks and the placenta (afterbirth) is expelled normally without assistance. Never try to remove the placenta. If the placenta is still attached after 2 hours, call your veterinarian because it may result in a medical emergency.

AFTER FOALING CARE

It's advised to monitor the mare and foal closely for the first 72 hours as it's important that the dam and foal bond. It's advisable to attend the foaling of all maiden mares to ensure safe delivery and bonding. If the mare does not accept the foal readily, you may need to restrain the mare and ensure that the foal nurses.

Mares are usually thirsty after foaling. Offer your mare slightly warm water; but do not let her drink too much at once. She also may be hungry, a wet mash is advised.

Allow the mare and foal outside for exercise in a small paddock or pasture the day after birth. Exercise may aid the mare in expelling uterine discharge and speeds the return of the uterus to normal condition. If there is a foul-smelling uterine discharge, this indicates a uterine infection, which requires veterinary attention.

A swollen, hot udder is an indication the foal has not nursed or the mare may have mastitis. If the foal has not nursed within the first 2 hours, there may be a problem and veterinary advice should be sought. It is essential the foal gets this first milk, called colostrum, as it contains the antibodies the foal will need to protect it from infectious disease.

It is always a good idea to have the vet check over the mare and foal shortly after foaling. At this time, an injection can be given to the foal to protect it from Tetanus as well as, if necessary, an enema can be given if it has not yet passed the meconium (first faeces).

Foaling is an incredible experience that is worth careful consideration. Allowing your mare to breed requires a strong dedication to the process. By ensuring that you are able to provide your mare with the necessary elements for a healthy pregnancy, you can aid your mare in the foaling process and reduce the risk of complications.

Providing your mare with an adequate supply of vitamins and minerals, exercise, good quality health care and a safe environment will make the process easier and more enjoyable for both you and your mare.

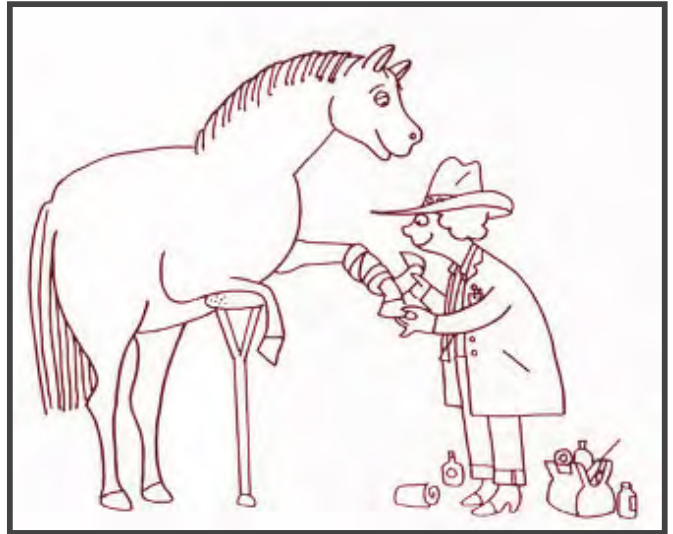
First Aid For Your Horse

Anyone who owns a horse will want to ensure that they stay healthy and happy in their pasture and shelter. If they get hurt, you will need to respond immediately. Because of this, it is recommended you keep a First Aid kit in a handy place in case your horse ever needs attention.

What to do if your horse is injured or ill:

Calm yourself and proceed in a slow calm manner. If you are in a panic it helps no one, least of all an injured horse who is no doubt also excited and scared. Keep your horse calm and safe, if you can not approach him safely then don't, you will be of no use if you are injured yourself. If safe to do so, get the horse to a quiet familiar area.

Safely assess the problem. You can help the vet a great deal if you are able to tell them everything you have noted. For example: is the horse distressed, kicking at its tummy, sweating, passing dung, or if there is a wound, how much is it bleeding, is it a tear or puncture and if it is a lameness, can the horse put any weight on it, is the leg broken, can you see bone. In any case, do not feed or water the horse until advised by the vet.



What to do before the vet arrives:

- **Colic** - If you suspect colic, and if it is possible, keep the horse moving, do not give him water or food.
- **Profuse Bleeding** - Apply a pressure bandage directly over the wound to slow down the bleeding. Apply pressure to the wound with a thick pad of gauze or clean cloth folded several times to create a pad and apply Vet Wrap firmly over the padding. If location of bleeding prevents your being able to wrap it, hold it in place until bleeding stops. If the pad becomes blood soaked don't remove it, just add another pad and continue to apply pressure. Allow at least 30-60 minutes for fresh wounds to stop bleeding. Large fresh wounds usually need sutured to promote healing and minimize scarring.
- **Cuts & Tears** – gently hose the wound to clean it and keep the swelling down. Place a dry bandage over the wound until the vet arrives to assess whether it needs suturing.
- **Puncture Wounds** - Puncture wounds can be deceiving. Frequently they appear to be minor wounds. Depending on the depth and contamination they can rapidly become infected. Pain and swelling within the first 24 to 72 hours after the puncture are good indicators that there is a problem. Punctures seal up rapidly so the infection has no place to go and spreads to surrounding tissue, therefore it is particularly important to have puncture wounds assessed by the vet as soon as possible.
- **Bruising & Contusion** - A hard blow that does not break the skin can be treated with ice compresses for a minimum of 30 minutes and oral bute (consult your Vet before using) to limit swelling and pain.
- **Lameness** – There are numerous reasons why a horse may be lame. Determine which leg/legs are affected and what's the nature of the injury. If you suspect the leg may be broken, keep the horse calm and do not move him if possible until the vet arrives. If you think it is a laminitis, pus in the foot, or nail in the foot, place the horse in a confined area until the vet arrives.

A call to the veterinary surgeon might not necessarily result in a visit. Advice over the telephone can give reassurance and ensure correct first-aid treatment is given. Calling the veterinary surgeon early is essential. It is false economy and may cause suffering to the animal, if attempts are made to treat an injury (or if the severity of the injury is underestimated), and then only seeking professional help, when things have got much worse.

If in doubt, always call the vet!

FOAL SEPTICAEMIA



Septicaemia is one of the most serious conditions in foals, and unfortunately a relatively common occurrence in neonates. It is caused by infection of the bloodstream which causes inflammation all over the body. As soon as a foal is born it is exposed to bacteria. Two of the most vulnerable areas for bacteria to enter a newborn's system are through its navel area and through its mouth. Therefore it is vital that two things occur shortly after birth: the navel is disinfected with a gentle iodine and the foal must receive the mare's first milk (colostrum). It is from the mare's colostrum that the newborn receives vital antibody protection against bacteria.

It is extremely important to observe newborn foals in the first 24 hours as this is when symptoms of Septicaemia will often show up. An unhealthy foal will go downhill very quickly and without veterinary care may die in a matter of hours.

A healthy foal will be exploring its surrounding, not be shy about trying out its legs, take frequent naps but be up and alert again after that. The septic foal will just slowly decline, want to sleep all the time, and become less responsive to stimulation.

There are **a lot of different clinical signs** that can be associated with septicaemia. Most affected foals will have several of these signs, but not necessarily all of them. Some of these signs can also be caused by other problems, but remember that a newborn foal with problems of virtually any kind is at higher risk for developing septicaemia. Signs of septicaemia may include:

- **Depression**
- **Lack of suckle reflex** (normal foals should try to suck on a person's fingers or a bottle nipple if placed in the foal's mouth)
- **Fever** (too high a temperature), or **hypothermia** (too low a temperature)
- **High heart rate** (most new born foals have a heart rate between 80-120 beats per minute)
- **High respiratory rate** or **trouble breathing**
- **Gums and lips** an **abnormal colour** (e.g. dark red or purplish)
- **Swollen, painful joint(s)**
- **Cloudy eyes** (i.e. anterior uveitis)
- **Seizure activity** if the brain is inflamed
- **Lack of urine production** or renal failure

In most cases, the appropriate action to take if you have a foal with any combination of these signs is to **call your veterinarian as soon as possible**. ***A sick neonatal foal is an emergency.***

Mare Swabbing - Update

Recently we have had queries as to why the results for mare swabbing (CEM) /bloods (EVA) have been taking so long. We contacted the laboratory to enquire about the turn around time and process involved.

- **CEM** – Takes 7 working days (not including weekends) from receiving the sample
- **EVA** – Takes 2 working days and are only processed on Monday, Wednesday, & Friday's

They stress that this is a **minimum** turn around time and may take longer. If your results are taking longer than the suggested times above, please contact the office on 01483 274905.

Shotter & Byers Equine Veterinary Services

We are moving! We are leaving the offices at Smithbrook Kilns in Cranleigh. As of April 6th 2009, we will be in our new office premises at **Furzen Farm, Furzen Lane, Okewood Hill Dorking, Surrey, RH15 5QE**. Our new phone number will be **01306 627706**. This will be the first stage of our new clinic development

Hawkins Incineration Services

We appreciate that this is a difficult subject, but due to the recent economical changes and clients failing to settle their accounts promptly, Hawkins Incineration Services has asked that we let our clients know that they will only carry out disposal and cremation services with payment prior to collection. Payment is either by cash or credit card. (They can unfortunately no longer take cheques.) For further details: call **01403 864361**.