



Winter 2009 Newsletter

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PREPARING FOR WINTER

It is not surprising that the conditions which cause problems for our horses in winter involve a damp soggy environment, mud, cold short days and stuffy stables. Here is a list of common illnesses, by no means exhaustive, that we see day in day out.

FEET

Winter Laminitis

CAUSE: Frozen grass is thought to liberate sugars and fructans. When eaten in large amounts the cause laminitis. Highest incidence is in January and February.

SIGNS: As in all laminitis, acute lameness in all four feet.

PREVENTION: Avoid grazing on frozen and newly thawed grass. Feed hay before turn out.

TREATMENT: Requires urgent veterinary treatment. *Danilon, aspirin, acp* and foot support.

Thrush

CAUSE: Wet bedding and poor foot hygiene

SIGNS: Smelly black discharge around frogs. Seldom lame.

PREVENTION: Regular hoof picking and dry bedding.

TREATMENT: Hoof disinfectant, table salt.

Soggy Hooves

CAUSE: Prolonged exposure to wet bedding, muddy fields.

SIGNS: Pulled shoes.

PREVENTION and TREATMENT: *Keratex* hoof gel

SKIN

Mud rash

CAUSE: Micro scratches from grit in mud allowing infection to enter skin.

SIGNS: Pussy, scabby swollen legs below knees.

PREVENTION: Wash legs with hose and importantly towel dry legs. Use moisture barrier, *Keratex* mud shield.

TREATMENT: Antiseptic shampoo, *Malacetic*, antibiotics, steroid cream, anti-inflammatories.



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Leg Mange

CAUSE: Chorioptic mange

SIGNS: Scabby itchy legs, bleeding sores, mainly in feathered legs

PREVENTION: Insecticide. *Dectomax* injection, front line spray, barricade

TREATMENT: Insecticides, antibiotics, anti-inflammatories.

Rain Scald

CAUSE: Bacteria on skin infect hair follicles in parentally wet skin.

SIGNS: Painful cup like scabs mainly over the back of the horse

PREVENTION: Provide shelter or a rug.

TREATMENT: Antiseptic shampoo, antibiotics

Lice

CAUSE: Biting or sucking louse

SIGNS: Intense itchiness, patchy hair loss on head and neck. Nits on hair

PREVENTION and TREATMENT: Topical insecticide, *Barricade* or *Switch*

Fungal skin allergy

CAUSE; Airborne fungal spores

SIGNS: Intense itchiness all over body, no nits

PREVENTION: Good ventilation

TREATMENT: Soothing shampoo, *Dermally*, vaccine, steroids

RESPIRATORY TRACT

Lower Airways Disease/COPD

CAUSE: Airborne dust and fungi.

SIGNS: White nasal discharge, cough with no loss of appetite

PREVENTION: Clean air, good ventilation, dust free bedding and straw

TREATMENT: *Ventipulmin*, inhalers, steroids.



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Respiratory Infections

CAUSE: Inhaled viruses and bacteria infections

SIGNS: Sick horse, nasal discharge, cough, anorexia

PREVENTION: Vaccination, quarantine.

TREATMENT: Always call out vet. Antibiotics, anti-inflammatories, *Sputilosin*, *Ventipulmin*.

GUT

Colic Impaction

CAUSE: Poor mastication due to sharp teeth, eats bed, dehydration

SIGNS: Colic signs, loss of appetite, no droppings

PREVENTION: rasp teeth

TREATMENT: Always call a vet, fluids and liquid paraffin by mouth painkillers

Spasmodic

CAUSE: Irregular feeding pattern, gastric ulcers

SIGNS: Colic separated by resting phase, anorexia

PREVENTION: Regular feeding, avoid sudden diet change

TREATMENT: Always call out a vet, antispasmodic

Gastric Ulcers

CAUSE: Poor fibre/concentrate ratio in diet, wind sucking

SIGNS: Recurrent colic, poor feeder and doer, wind sucker

PREVENTION: Minimise stress, add fibre to diet

TREATMENT: *Gastro-guard*, anti acids balanced diet