



McKenzie, Bryson and Marshall

Equine Winter Newsletter 2012



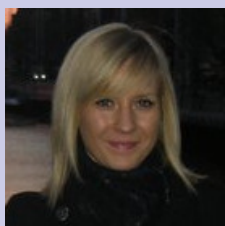
New Year, New Faces

As many of you may have heard Dr Matthews is retiring from general practice this year.

So on the 4th of January a new equine vet called Mhairi MacKay joined the practice. Mhairi is originally from East Kilbride and during her time at Glasgow Vet School saw much of her work experience here at the practice.

After graduating in 2006, Mhairi moved to Yorkshire where she worked in a mixed practice for 1 year before joining an equine practice in Lancashire where she has been based for the last 4 years. During this time Mhairi has been working toward gaining a Royal College Certificate in Equine Internal Medicine which she hopes to complete later this year.

Mhairi is thoroughly looking forward to meeting all our clients and of course their horses!



Large Animal Receptionist

Many of you will have noticed a new voice in the large animal department when you call to book your equine appointments. Yvonne, who has been with us for the last 5 years, has recently started her maternity leave. Covering for Yvonne we have Amy Howie. Yvonne and Amy had a bit of an overlap to make the transition smoother and Amy is doing a great job so far!

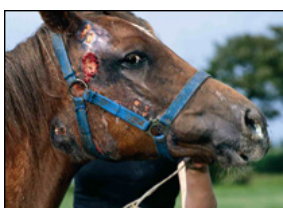
Weight clinics

Marion has been busy out and about visiting yards with the weight scales. Now is a good time of year to think about your horse's weight. Whilst there is less grass about it is easier to make changes. Certainly if you have a horse that is over weight now is the time to get on top of it so you are ahead of the game come the spring time. Weighing your horse is not just for rotund ponies, it is really important to know your horse's weight so you can dose it accurately when worming. Give Marion a call if you have any questions or want to arrange to have your horse weighed.

Todd the donkey on the scales >



Strangles



As you may be aware, recently there have been a number of strangles outbreaks. The number and duration of these outbreaks seem to be increasing and there is evidence that the disease is constantly

present in low levels in southwest Scotland. Recently a vaccine has been introduced to reduce the risk of the disease. It is a live bacterial vaccine which is administered into the up-

per lip of the horse as shown. This is best done on a yard basis. The course of vaccination is 2 vaccines 6 weeks apart, followed by 6 monthly boosters. At present the MSD Health (the vaccine manufacturer) is offering the second dose for the primary course for free so the total cost for the primary course is £29.50.



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Settlement of Accounts & Insurance Matters

Just to remind everyone that we offer a 10% discount if your account is settled within the month in which it is issued. If you are making an insurance claim it is your responsibility to make sure the claim is followed up and the insurance company has all the information they require for the claim to proceed. Please call us sooner rather than later to let us know if there is going to be a delay.

Mud Fever



Winter is here, and as well as a jolly fellow in a red suit with his trusty reindeer, so is the rain and mud! Many of you will have had horses with mud fever and know how frustrating and difficult it can be to treat.

Mud fever is a bacterial infection of the epidermis (or upper layer) of the skin which left untreated can cause deeper infection, lameness, and scarring. It is caused by a combination of the right environmental conditions (wet and muddy fields) causing changes in the skin's natural defences by washing away oils and softening the hard epidermal crust and colonisation by pathogenic bacteria. One bacterium (dermatophilus) is particularly well suited to colonise the damaged skin and this is present in the environment at all times so is ready to take advantage of the situation! Once the

skin's outer defences are breached this leads to infection by other bacteria, inflammation, and some of the other more harmful side effects.

Mud fever characteristically causes crusting of the skin with scabs which when removed have pus underneath and an area of reddened inflamed skin. These crusts can be hot and painful to touch and some horses resent these being touched. Deeper infections lead to extensive swelling of the legs and discharge through the skin as it loses its ability to remove fluid build-up.

We diagnose this condition usually by the symptoms and occasionally by the appearance of the bacteria on smears taken from the crusts (see picture). Treatment involves removing the horse from the damp environment (to a dry shavings bed ideally), carefully removing as many scabs as possible, and then treating with a topical antibacterial preparation such as Malaseb shampoo or a chlorhexidine disinfectant and application of an antibacterial

cream such as Flamazine or Sudocrem. In some cases anti-inflammatories and antibiotics may be appropriate. The use of over the counter wonder products or washes is difficult to justify due to many of these containing agents such as soaps or perfumes/coulourants which can inflame damaged skin or trigger an immune response worsening the condition. If in doubt please call us or use plain warmed water!



Once resolved, it is essential to prevent the horse getting it again because repeated infections can lead to damage of the skin. Careful paddock and turnout management is required and leg covers may also assist. When bringing the horse in from the field either hose the legs and dry them, or allow the mud to dry and brush off thoroughly. Hosing the legs and allowing to drip dry can make the condition worse. Recently the use of non-scented talcum powder (baby powder) has been suggested as a further way of drying following towelling off.

Red worm warning

Have you treated your horse for encysted red worm this winter? Even if your horse has had a negative worm egg count all summer it may be at risk of red worm infection. It is usually the larval stage of the parasite that causes damage to the gut rather than the adults which produce the eggs so despite a negative worm egg count your horse may be harboring these parasites. Please give us a call to discuss your worming plan.



Notifications

Would you like to get notification of practice meetings and your vaccination reminders by text or e-mail? We are setting up a system to allow us to do this and you may be asked when you phone to make an appointment. In the mean time if you are keen to start using this system please give us a call to let us know and allow us to check your details.

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