



## AUTUMN 2016 NEWSLETTER

The HEVC TEAM hope everyone had a lovely Easter and are looking forward to the cooler weather. As the breeding season comes to an end we would like CONGRATULATE our advanced reproduction vets, Dr Cris Clark & Dr Kylie Hardwicke, for their **excellent success** with the embryo transfer programme. At the end of the season we had a **92% successful transfer rate on recovered embryos!**

**10% discount on routine dentals, faecal egg counts and vaccinations from 11<sup>th</sup> April to Friday 13<sup>th</sup> May.**

HEVC is having a **healthy horse**

As the breeding season ends and the cooler weather approaches, it is a perfect time to catch up with all the routine Healthy Horse care.

**special** from **Monday 11th April to Friday 13<sup>th</sup> May**. Oral Health equals overall Health. Have your horse's teeth done regularly. **Save 10%** on all your routine Dental, Vaccinations, Faecal egg counts, Worming and Podiatry

### HELPING THE GILLI ISLAND PONIES

Our dedicated and caring vets Dr Jen Lugton & Dr Jason Shadur are currently in Bali volunteering their time to help the ponies on the island. Animal Aid Abroad, Gili Eco Trust and Jakarta Animal Aid Network have joined forces to help the long suffering carriage ponies on Gili Trawangan Island, Lombok, Bali.

These horses and ponies are, more often than not, emaciated and diseased. They are given minimal salt water to drink, insufficient amounts of poor quality food and receive no veterinary care. They work all day and night in stifling heat ferrying tourists, luggage, working materials and rubbish all around the island. The owners ensure tourists mainly see the healthier animals. The horses that carry working materials are usually in the worst condition.

Along with veterinary treatment, education is needed to help the owners understand husbandry and management. We have had an amazing response from the Hawkesbury equine community donating money and various gear and supplies, which Jen & Jason took with them to the island.

Reports from Jen & Jason have been that the ponies are very grateful for the veterinary care and new gear they have received.

### POP QUIZ



"Here is a 10yo Thoroughbred gelding who is drinking and urinating more than normal and also has laminitis."

How much water should a horse normally drink in a day?

What are 2 of the most common causes of excessive drinking and urinating?

What tests/s would a vet use to help determine cause of the above symptoms?



Pic of Jen & Jason working together to help one of the Gilli Island ponies

For more pics please see our **[facebook page](#)**.

HEVC sends out quarterly newsletters. To receive these by email please call the office on (02) 4577 4611 or check our facebook page.

## POP QUIZ ANSWERS



The average 500kg horse will drink between 30-50 L of water per day depending on heat and type of feed. Horses in work may require much more than this.

Horses that drink and urinate more frequently than normal are said to have "polyuria and polydipsia" (often shortened to PUPD). There can be many different causes of PUPD. However, the 2 most common causes of PUPD in horses are renal (kidney) disease and Cushing's.

To help determine the cause of PUPD a vet needs to perform a thorough clinical examination along with bloods tests to check renal (kidney) function and an ACTH test to check for Cushing's disease.

## NEW BIOCHEMISTRY MACHINE

To keep abreast with the latest technology available, we have upgraded our biochemistry machine. **Our in-house pathology lab** allows us to get comprehensive bloods results the same day. This can make a huge difference especially for the critically sick horses in hospital where we can now have results **within minutes if required.**

Our regular full blood profile will now include several more biochemistry tests as standard.



## SPOTLIGHT ON CUSHINGS DISEASE

**What is it?** Also known as Pituitary Pars Intermedia Dysfunction or PPID, Cushing's Disease is a dysfunction of the pituitary gland. The pituitary gland is located at the base of the brain and is an important endocrine organ that produces a variety of different hormones including ACTH (adrenocorticotropin hormone). ACTH travels through the horse's blood stream and causes the adrenal glands (near the kidneys) to increase production of cortisol, which is a type of steroid. It is this over production of cortisol that affects the horse and can explain the majority of clinical signs seen in this condition.

It is most common in older horses (18 – 23 years). However it can be seen in much younger horses.

**What to look for?** Horses with Cushing's disease can have some or all of the following symptoms:

- Recurrent bouts of laminitis
- Abnormal hair coat
- Increased drinking and urinating
- Pot-bellied appearance
- Lethargy
- Recurrent skin and respiratory infections
- Increased susceptibility to worms
- Muscle wastage and abnormal fat deposition



**How to test for it?** Older ponies with the typical curly long hair coat can be assumed to have Cushing's and started on treatment. For those horses without the typical hairy coat, a blood test to measure ACTH can be performed. This requires a vet to take a sample to send off to the lab and will take approximately 7 working days for the result to return. **The best time to test ACTH levels is in AUTUMN.**

### **What are the treatment and management options?**

Unfortunately there is no cure for Cushing's disease but the drug Pergolide can help reduce the effects of the disease and aid in managing those affected. Pergolide comes in either liquid or tablet form and will need to be given once daily for the rest of the horse's life. Pergolide is reported to be up to 80% effective in reducing the severity of clinical signs.

Management is just as important as medicating horses. Cushinoid horses (even on medication) are at risk for infections, dental disease, laminitis and worm burdens. Routine dental and faecal egg counts are **imperative.**