



HAWKESBURY EQUINE VETERINARY CENTRE

WINTER 2017 NEWSLETTER

Winter has arrived and it is looking to be a cold one this year in the Hawkesbury.

Winter is the perfect time to perform all **your routine veterinary** care including **vaccination, worming, dentals and castrations.**

So in July the HEVC team will be having our bi-annual **healthy horse package** special running again. This package includes a physical examination, a routine dental check-up, vaccination, faecal egg worm count and de-worming.

Our staff & their horses

Recently our vets, nurses and office staff have been successfully competing with their horses throughout NSW:

Dr Emily Streckfuss was named 1st Middleweight and "Best conditioned" horse at Tooraweenah 80km ride and 1st Middleweight in the 120km Mudgee Endurance Ride on her horse "Webbs Creek Starlight".

Dr Kylie Hardwicke took 3 of her weanlings that she bred, trained and prepared to the HBGA Futurity Show in Tamworth where she placed 1st, 2nd and 4th out of 19 entries in the \$5,000 weanling halter futurity.

Dr Jen Lugton has been having some fun with her horse "Cool & Classy" at campdraft competitions throughout NSW.

James Hannon took two of his Clydesdales to the NSW foal show, where "Hannons Alpine Star" won his 3yo gelding class (handled by one of our other nurses Amy) and his foal "Hannons Inquisitor" was named champion colt foal.

Jo Swarbrick and her mare "Sapphire Park Clarity" did exceptionally well at the Australian Arabian National Championships where she took out Silver champion ridden Arabian pony.

Sharniece Hazell has been competing with her lovely boy "Arion" where she is gaining more and more experience in 3 day eventing.

In staff news, we would like to welcome James Hannon to our nursing team. James graduated from the University of Queensland in 2007 with a Bachelor of Applied Science in Equine Science and has over 20 years experience working in the equine industry. James is an excellent addition to our caring nursing team.

As it is the end of the financial year, we would appreciate any outstanding accounts to be finalized prior to June 30th

POP QUIZ



- What is wrong with this stifle?
- How does this condition develop?
- What symptoms would this horse have?
- What are the treatment options?



POP QUIZ ANSWERS

This stifle has an OCD lesion.

Osteochondritis dissecans (OCD) is a relatively **common developmental disease** that affects the cartilage and bone in the joints of horses. It causes clinical signs of disease in 5-25% of all horses and **can occur in all horse breeds**.

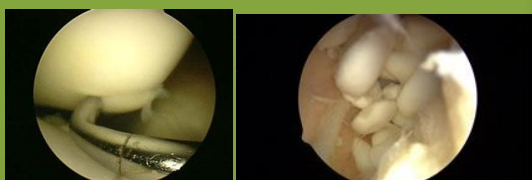
How & why do OCDs occur? When cartilage in a joint doesn't form normally it and bone underneath can become irregular in thickness and weaker than in normal joints. This can cause the development of cartilage and bone flaps that can either remain partially attached to the bone or break off and float around in the joint. These loose flaps and areas of abnormal cartilage and bone cause inflammation in the joint and over time may lead to the development of arthritis. OCD is usually caused by a combination of several factors acting together, including:

- Rapid growth and large body size
- Nutrition: Diets very high in energy or have an imbalance in trace minerals (low copper diets)
- Genetics: Risk of OCD may be partially inherited
- Hormonal imbalances: Insulin and thyroid hormones
- Trauma and exercise: Trauma (including routine exercise) is often involved in the formation and loosening of the OCD flap

What are the symptoms? The most common sign is **effusion** (swelling) in the joint of a young horse. Signs can be seen as early as 5 months of age, but may not occur until the horse is started into work. Lameness varies with location and severity of the OCD; most horses are sound at a walk but may display lameness at faster speeds or when put into work. OCDs can occur in virtually all joints, but they occur most frequently in the hock, stifle and fetlock joints.

How is it treated? Usually the best treatment is surgical removal of the abnormal bone and cartilage. The **most common technique used to remove OCD fragments is arthroscopy**.

Arthroscopy is performed by making two or more small (less than 1cm) incisions into the joint through which a small camera called an arthroscope and other specially designed instruments are placed.



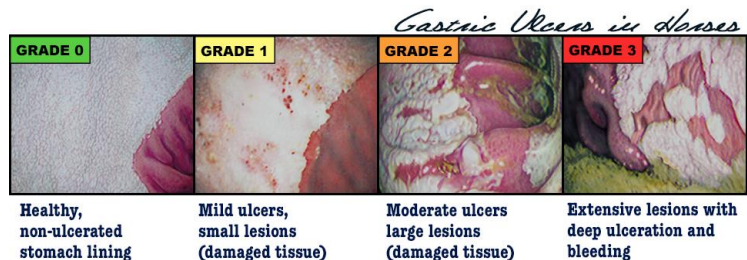
SPOTLIGHT GASTRIC ULCERS

In May, Randlab held a free gastric scoping day at HEVC. We had an excellent turn-up and were able to diagnose some significant ulcers in some of our patients.

Clinical signs of gastric ulcers are vague and are not specific but can include; Poor appetite, colic, decreased performance, attitude change, poor body condition and weight loss.

There is only one sure way to confirm ulcers, Esophagogastrosopy, or simply "stomach scoping," is the only means to prove whether ulcers exist or not. No food is to be fed six to eight hours before scoping. A light sedative is given five minutes before the passing of the three-meter scope, similar to passing a stomach tube, down the horse's oesophagus. It is extremely common that the horses scoped have severe ulceration of the squamous part of the stomach area where 80 percent of the ulcers are found in adult horses.

The severity of stomach ulcers is rated in grades from an inflamed but intact epithelium (Grade 0 ulcer), superficial erosions of the mucosal surface (Grade 1 ulcer) to single superficial erosions of the mucosal surface (Grade 2 ulcer) to multiple actively haemorrhaging hyperaemic (Grade 3 ulcer).



Some tips to prevent ulcers: Avoid long periods without food and feed frequent small meals; Place feed bins on the ground to simulate the horse's normal grazing position; Feed a small amount of lucerne chaff prior to work as Lucerne chaff helps in two ways by acting as a physical barrier and secondly the calcium in the Lucerne binds the acid; Do not exercise on an empty stomach ; Avoid physical and behavioural stress; Avoid long treatments with non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs such as Phenylbutazone; Allow the horse to walk around and self-exercise and graze if possible.

Our next FREE scoping day will be on 4th July 2017 (sedation fee only). Please contact the office to book your spot on (02) 4577 4611 or email hevc@bigpond.com.