



CHRISTMAS 2019 NEWSLETTER

The Vets and Staff at HEVC would like to wish all their patients and their owners a happy and healthy festive season.

We have had a tough start to the summer season with severe fires and winds affecting the wider Hawkesbury area. Just like in humans, it is important to remember these conditions can contribute to poor air quality including smoke and particulates which can aggravate your horse's airways and build up in the respiratory system resulting in conditions like bronchitis, running noses, persistent coughs, wheezing and increased physical effort in breathing. As a result it is wise to restrict physical activity when these conditions are severe. These

particulates are very small which enables them to reach the deepest areas of the lungs. These particulates can also alter the immune system and reduce the ability of the lungs to clear normal air pathogens like pollen and dust and makes them more likely to suffer from inflammatory airway disease or infections. Additionally, keep your flyveils on to prevent the dust from causing eye irritation and ulceration.

We have also seen an increase in wounds recently. It is important to keep your horses in safe paddocks during windy conditions and to check on them regularly. If your horse does suffer from a wound, please do not hesitate to contact us as it is often difficult to determine the severity of the wound with the naked eye alone.

The breeding season is in full swing!

We've been busy with plenty of fresh, chilled and frozen breeding this year and enjoyed plenty of beautiful client foals on the ground. If you are still considering breeding, be sure to get in contact with us sooner rather than later before the breeding season is over!



To enquire about our ET or embryo freezing program, please contact our friendly reception staff for more details.



POP QUIZ

Can you guess which of these wounds would be more likely to result in severe injury?

- Upper leg wound
- Fetlock wound
- Wire wrapped around cannon bone

SEE OVER FOR ANSWERS →

Staff News

Emily Streckfuss has returned from maternity leave. We welcome her back to the team. She will be working on a part time basis and is excited to be back in the saddle!

Equine Wounds

Wounds are one of the most common causes of injury in horses and usually require veterinary attention.

It can often be difficult to determine the severity of wounds, even small wounds can be deceiving. There is always a risk of secondary problems including infection, septic structures, foreign bodies, sequestrums or delayed wound healing occurring. As such it is advisable to seek veterinary attention as soon as possible for the best long term outcome. Bandaging, a course of antibiotics and anti-inflammatories or radiographs may be advisable.

An **upper limb laceration** is a commonly seen injury in horses. Although it may look uncomplicated, these wounds can often be caused by penetrating injuries. There is always a risk that a foreign body (e.g. a stick or piece of wire) has become embedded in the wound and will require removal to prevent infection and allow normal, successful wound healing processes to occur.

In this case the veterinarian would clean and explore the wound for foreign bodies prior to advising subsequent treatment.



Wounds over the **distal limb** are high risk areas for serious infection. The fetlock joint, tendon sheath, pastern joint or coffin joint could be affected. Septic structures are classified as an equine emergency, and timely treatment is essential for the horse's long term soundness. If the veterinarian suspects there is a risk of synovial structure involvement, diagnostics like a synoviocentesis (taking a sample of fluid), radiographs or a blood test may be recommended. Treatment often includes systemic antibiotics and anti-inflammatories, and may include a joint flush under general anaesthetic.



Horses are prone to pawing and kicking out which often results in getting their legs **tangled in wire**. Once the wire has been removed, there may be minimal evidence of immediate damage. However, a tightly wrapped wire can cause pressure necrosis of the skin, meaning the skin does not receive adequate blood flow and will slough off within a few days. Secondly, the bone can be damaged, causing a sequestrum. In these cases bandaging is the most important treatment, while a sequestrum will usually require removal or debridement after diagnosis with radiographs.



While you are waiting for the veterinarian to arrive, the following steps are advisable

- 1) **Hose the wound gently, removing as much debris and dirt as possible**
- 2) **Keep the horse calm and still**
- 3) **Move the horse to an area with running water and adequate light**
- 4) **Avoid dirty, dusty areas that may contaminate the wound**