



WINTER 2020 NEWSLETTER

HEVC is excited to announce that we will be visiting the greater Blue Mountains and Southern Highlands areas for prebooked calls on a regular basis.

The next **Blue Mountains** visit will be on Thursday 25th June 2020, with future visits being scheduled fortnightly, if there is sufficient demand. The regions will include Lithgow, Megalong Valley, Oberon, Hartley and the surrounding areas. We will also be visiting the **Southern Highlands**, with the next visit date will be the 19th of June 2020. If you require a visitation in these areas including dentals, radiographs, vaccinations, lameness examinations or castrations please contact HEVC on 02 4577 4611 for further information, dates or to make a booking .

Our next **gastric scoping** day with the Randlab team will be on Thursday 16 July. These days are held bi-monthly so please contact our office to secure an appointment.

As Covid 19 restrictions ease, please remember to let us know if you have any flu like symptoms or are feeling unwell prior to booking a consultation.

We've recently said goodbye to our full time receptionist, Emily. We are thankful for her time with us and wish her all the best in her next adventure.

We also welcome our new part time receptionist, Maddi from the 15th of June. Maddi comes from a dressage background and is currently studying her second university degree part time.

POP QUIZ



This horse has a very sore, swollen eye.

- A. Corneal ulcer
- B. Trauma
- C. Foreign body
- D. Eyelid injury
- E. Uveitis

See over page for more information →

Winter Management Tips:

1. **Castrations:** This is a great time to get your castrations done during the cool period while there are minimal flies around.
2. **Faecal Egg counts:** Are beneficial in managing your worming plans and can save you money in the long run. FECs are especially recommended in horses that have recently been losing weight or had soft manures.
3. **Check waters:** It's important to check your waters in the morning to ensure they haven't frozen overnight. Horses often reduce their water intake during colder weather, predisposing them to impaction colic. Try adding small amounts of salt (1tsp – 1tb once daily) or more water to hard feeds to increase your horse's water intake.
4. **Rugging:** Over the cooler months, many people like to keep warm rugs on during the day. It is important to check under rugs regularly for skin rubs. Older horses are more susceptible, especially on their withers.



Gastric Ulceration

Is your horse showing a poor work ethic, 'girthiness', mild colic or a poor appetite?

These clinical signs can all occur in horses suffering from non glandular gastric ulceration.

Gastric ulcers most commonly form when the normal stomach acid is not neutralized by saliva from chewing food. The acid splashes up the sides of the stomach, onto the non glandular mucosa (above the margo plicatus), causing ulceration of the stomach lining (Fig. 1).

Horses are at risk of developing gastric ulceration when in heavy training, fed low roughage feeds or high grain diets, extended periods of stabling, extended travel or severe illness. Horses prone to being anxious are also at a risk.

Prevention: A regular and constant supply of roughage, like pasture grass or hay, a low grain diet and feeding small amounts of hay or chaff prior to riding can all help prevent gastric ulcers forming.

The only definitive way to **diagnose** equine gastric ulcers is with a gastroscope. There are two different types of gastric ulcers - glandular and non glandular ulceration. Non glandular is the most common and most efficiently treated. Ulcers are graded from 0-4 (Fig. 2). 0 is classified as normal, grade 3 are large single or superficial lesions and grade 4 are extensive with areas of apparent deep ulceration. **Treatment plans** include management changes and omeprazole or sucralfate therapy. Omeprazole is a prescription only medicine. Omeprazole acts on the proton pumps of the stomach, neutralizing the acid. On the contrary, sucralfate lines the surface of the stomach, protecting it from the stomach acid. Sucralfate, omeprazole and ranitidine are the only products proven to aid in the treatment of gastric ulceration.

If you have any concerns about your horse, please contact HEVC for further information or to book a time.

Next Gastric Scoping day with Randlab - Thursday 16 July

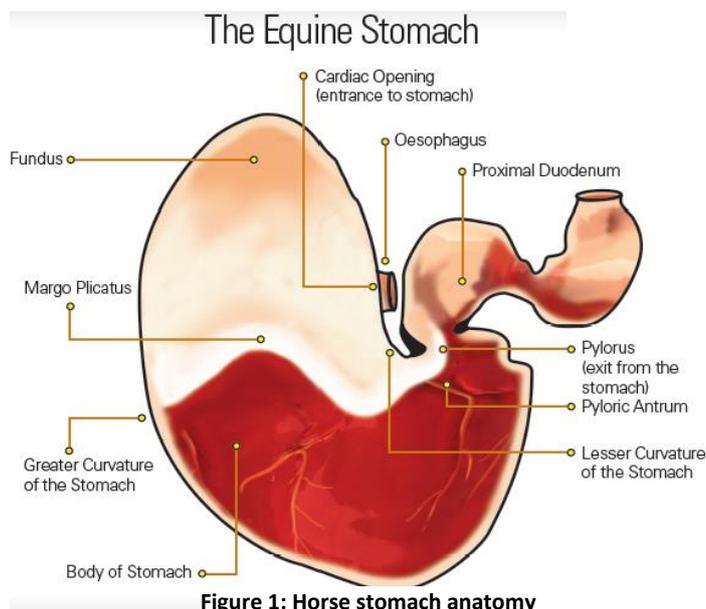


Figure 1: Horse stomach anatomy



Grade 0 (normal)



Grade 1



Grade 2



Grade 3



Grade 4

Figure 2: Grade 0-4 gastric ulceration

POP QUIZ - Answers

In this case, this horse could be suffering from ANY of these ailments! The important thing to remember when your horse gets a sore, swollen or weeping eye, is that an eye injury is ALWAYS an emergency and often treatment is time dependent. A thorough examination with sedation, corneal staining and an ophthalmoscope is required to make an accurate diagnosis and implement the appropriate treatment plan to save your horse's eye. The longer appropriate treatment is deferred, the lower the chance of the eye making a full recovery.

