



Newman Equine Newsletter

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www.newmanequine.com

JUNE 2009

Keeping you in touch with your horse

PASASITOLOGY UPDATE

Brad Newman, DVM

Recently, there has been considerable research regarding infestation in horses. These studies show an increase in resistance of over-the-counter de-wormers from many of the parasites found in Central Florida. The most recent recommendation for horse owners to consider is a fecal exam, which will evaluate your horses current de-worming programs. This is a simple procedure we can perform here at the office by evaluating fresh manure from your horse. You may be familiar with a fecal exam, as it is the same technique that is used for your dogs and cats. We want to encourage as many horse owners as possible to have a fecal exam performed on their horses. We are currently performing free fecal exam with the purchase of a de-wormer, through the month of August. We encourage you to take advantage of this savings and safeguard your horses.

CALL THE OFFICE FOR MORE INFO



HEALTH CARE PLAN

Another great Idea to cut the cost of ownership is to invest in our very popular *Health Care Plan*. The *Health Care Plan* includes a complete annual care package for your horse.

- 4-Influenza/Rhinopneumonitis Vaccines
- 2-Eastern & Western Encephalitis Vaccines
- 1-West Nile Vaccine
- 1-Rabies Vaccine
- 1-Potomac Horse Fever Vaccine
- 4-De-worming Treatments
- 1-Annual Coggins Test

This package is only **\$335.00** for the year

Dental can be added at any time for only **\$130.00**

Need more reasons to purchase the Health Care Plan?

No *emergency fees* for horses on the plan

Consult with your vet for *free* on each of the 4 visits

We contact you when your horse is due for a visit from the Vet

CALL THE OFFICE FOR MORE INFO

(321) 639 4242

Is Your Horse at Risk for Gastric Ulcers?

Kim Moherman, DVM

Ulcers can be found in up to 90% of racehorses and 60% of show and performance horses. As additional research is performed on this disease, researchers have discovered that even your backyard pleasure horses are at risk for this disease.

Where do you find gastric ulcers?

The stomach is made up of two types of tissue; glandular tissue, which secretes the acids and other substances needed to break apart food and non-glandular tissue, that is similar to the tissue in the esophagus. These two types of tissues are divided in the stomach by a sharp ridge called the *Margo Plicatus*. This ridge is a common site for gastric ulcers in both adult horses and foals. Adult horses may only have gastric ulcers in the glandular tissue alone. Foals (and sometimes adult horses) often experience ulcers in a section of the small intestine called the duodenum.

What causes gastric ulcers?

Gastric ulcers form when a horse's stomach produces more acid and acid-like products than protective products like mucous and bicarbonate (an antacid). When the tissues in the stomach are exposed to high levels of acid for a prolonged period of time, damage often occurs. This damage is usually found in the non-glandular tissue near the *Margo Plicatus*. Many of our common feeding and management practices cause this acid overload to occur. When horses are fed just twice a day, the stomach is exposed to a prolonged period of time without feed to neutralize its naturally produced acid. Horses without access to adequate forage (pasture or free choice hay) between meals are risk, as well. Also, high-grain diets produce digestive byproducts called volatile fatty acids that can also contribute to ulcer development.

Gastric ulcers can also form after prolonged use of non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) such as Bute or Banamine. These products decrease the secretion of compounds called prostaglandins from the glandular tissue in the stomach. By decreasing prostaglandin production, the production of bicarbonate is decreased and the production of acid is increased, thus forming an ulcer. Gastric ulcers of this nature are primarily found in the glandular tissue of adult horses and foals.

Stress may also cause gastric ulcers. When your horse experiences a stressful situation such as a trailer ride, a new pasture mate, a competition, or even a change in feed, the horse's body releases *cortisol*. The extra *cortisol* releases blocked prostaglandin production and causes ulcers, similar to NSAIDs exposure.

Other, less common, causes of gastric ulcers include delayed gastric motility, delayed gastric emptying, and gastric outflow obstruction.

What are the clinical signs of gastric ulcers?

Many clinical signs exist for gastric ulcers. Many clinical signs overlap with other conditions such as dental problems and colic. Common clinical signs include:

- Frequent, low-grade colic
- Poor appetite
- Refusing grain
- Attitude changes
- Reluctance to train
- Grinding of teeth
- Dull mentation
- Weight loss
- Lying on their side more often

In foals, common clinical signs may also include:

- Frequent colic after suckling or eating
- Interrupted nursing due to discomfort
- Diarrhea

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How do you diagnose gastric ulcers?

Gastric ulcers are often detected by the presence of clinical signs and by response to symptomatic treatments such as ranitidine (Zantac). The only way to definitively diagnose gastric ulcers is by visualizing the ulcers using a video endoscope. We have the ability to do endoscopic exams for gastric ulcers at the clinic using our 10-foot video endoscope. If you are interested in an endoscopic exam for your horse, please contact the clinic.

How do you treat gastric ulcers?

Once gastric ulcers have been confirmed using a video endoscope, omeprazole is used to treat the ulcers. Omeprazole is a proton-pump inhibitor that shuts down excessive acid production in the stomach and allows gastric ulcers to heal. Many compounded forms of omeprazole are on the market; however, only GastroGard, an omeprazole paste produced by Merial, is approved by the Food and Drug Administration. GastroGard has a patented ingredient that is formulated to withstand the harsh conditions of a horse's stomach and deliver the drug to the stomach tissue to be absorbed. Other compounded forms are degraded by the stomach's acid before reaching the stomach tissue.

How do I prevent gastric ulcers in my horse?

There are many steps to help prevent gastric ulcers can be done at home and on the farm.

- Feed your horse more frequently by dividing up your horse's grain meals - throughout the day
- Provide your horse with access to pasture or free-choice hay
- If your horse must be stalled, allow your horse to see its pasture mates in the other stalls.
- Provide stimulation such as a ball or other play object in the stall can decrease stress and boredom

If you have any questions about gastric ulcers or are concerned that your horse may have gastric ulcers, please call the clinic to speak to one of our veterinarians at 321-639-4242.

Parting Words by Mari Good, DVM

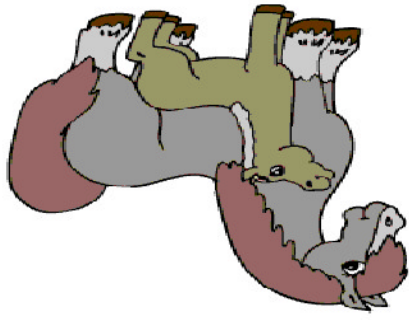
This paragraph has proven considerably harder to write than I ever anticipated. When I first moved to Brevard five years ago I was a stranger to you; one in a string of new veterinarians. Over the past five years, we have been through floods, fires, and hurricanes. I have shared in the personal events of many of your lives including births, marriages, personal and economic crises. I have visited new born foals, and been there in the late night hours when lives have ended. I entered a community of strangers who entrusted me with the care of their horses and over time became my friends.

It is with very mixed emotions that I leave Newman Equine to pursue other areas of veterinary medicine. Dr. Newman has been an outstanding boss. He has been more than generous in his efforts to accommodate my journey into motherhood; however, the nature of equine medicine being what it is, has made it extremely difficult to balance being a mother and a veterinarian. I would like to thank you all for the opportunity of working with your horses.

I greatly appreciate the trust you placed in me over the years, and will certainly miss the friendships we have formed. I wish you and your horses great things for the future. I am sad to leave you, but I am happy knowing you are in the very capable and compassionate hands of Drs. Newman and Moherman. Farewell.

Did you know?

- It's illegal in **Marion, SC**, to tickle a female under her chin with a feather duster to get her attention while she's riding a horse.
- In **New York City**, it is illegal to open or close an umbrella in the presence of a horse.
- It is illegal to fish from horseback in **Washington D.C., Colorado, and Utah**.
- **Tennessee** prohibits riders from lassoing fish.
- In **Kentucky**, it is illegal for a woman to appear in a bathing suit on a highway unless she is: escorted by at least two police officers; armed with a club; or lighter than 90 pounds or heavier than 200 pounds. The ordinance also specifically exempts female horses from such restrictions.
- In **Arizona**, it is illegal for cowboys to walk through a hotel lobby wearing their spurs



If you have any horse related material you would like to contribute, please send it to the office.
We welcome your comments and suggestions.

OUR WEBSITE IS LOADED WITH NEW CONTENT:
www.newmanequine.com