



Fall 2007 Newsletter



Kurt Lutgens, DVM
Thomas Welch, DVM

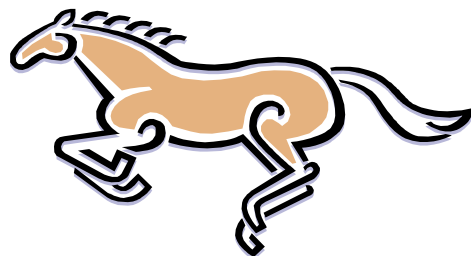
Christina Hill, DVM
Elaine Knape, DVM

Fall Vaccine Special

It's time to start thinking about protecting your horse from the challenges of infectious agents with fall vaccinations. At this time we recommend:

Influenza/ Rhinopneumonitis
Potomac Horse Fever
Intranasal Strangles

This series of vaccines will be offered at a reduced price for horses receiving the entire package. If six or more horses are scheduled to receive the entire series at one location, the farm call charge will be waived. This special price will only be available through November 15th so call the office soon to schedule your appointment.



Weanlings

We recommend beginning vaccination of weanlings at 4-6 months. The initial round of vaccines takes four visits to complete as all immunizations will require a booster.

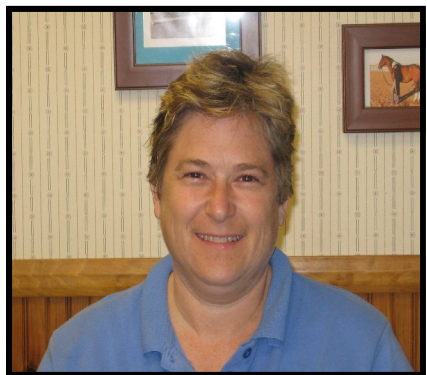
Broodmares

Broodmares should be confirmed as to their pregnancy status and vaccinated for Rhinopneumonitis at 3, 5, 7, and 9 months of pregnancy. Pre-foaling vaccines should be given one month prior to the mares due date.

Horses Traveling South

For those horses traveling south to warmer climates this winter, we recommend you booster West Nile Virus, EEE, and WEE vaccines as your horse's exposure to mosquito's will be extended. Also remember to check that your horse's negative Coggins is current and call for a health certificate to your destination at least 2 weeks in advance of your scheduled departure date.

Our Newest Doctor, Elaine Knape, DVM



Dr. Elaine Knape graduated from the University of Nebraska with a Bachelor of Science in Agriculture and went on to Vet School at Kansas State University where she graduated in 1995 with her Doctorate of Veterinary Medicine.

Dr. Knape began working in mixed practice and in 2003 she did an internship at Lone Star Equine Hospital and began practicing exclusively on horses. Dr. Knape joined Battenkill Equine in April 2007.

Potomac Horse Fever

The Facts

Potomac Horse Fever (PHF) is a bacterial disease. Attention focused on the disease when an outbreak of diarrhea in the Potomac River area of Maryland occurred in the mid 1980's.

The causative bacteria, *Neorickettsia risticii*, has been linked to parasites of fresh water snails. These parasites are released into the water by the snails during hot weather and ingested by aquatic fly larvae. Once consumed by the larvae, the parasite matures into a form that cannot be destroyed by the horse's stomach, which is why when a horse inadvertently ingests the infected insects, he is at risk of contracting Potomac Horse Fever. Horses CANNOT get PHF from drinking infested water or eating the snails, as at that time the parasite is in an immature form that is easily destroyed by the horse's stomach. Horses housed near fresh-water streams/ponds are at a higher risk because of the close proximity of the potentially infected insects.

Immunization

Horses should be immunized against Potomac Horse Fever in the spring and fall, as part of their preventative health care program. If your horse has never been vaccinated for PHF, he/she will need a booster vaccine 2-3 weeks after the first injection. While the vaccine does not guarantee that a horse will be 100% protected from the disease, there is much evidence that vaccinated horses are at a lower risk of contracting it.

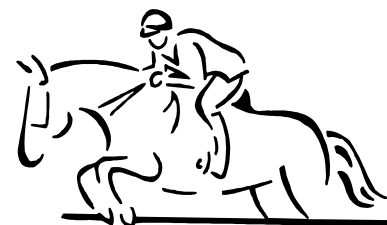
What You Need To Know

Early symptoms of PHF include **lethargy and depression**, an **elevated temperature**, and a **decreased appetite**. Once the disease progresses, horses will often develop harmful diarrhea and laminitis. Blood work will typically reveal a low white blood cell count. Early detection is critical in overcoming this disease. If caught early, starting intravenous antibiotics immediately will usually produce a positive result within 24-48 hours.

What You Can Do

- ◆ Vaccinate regularly
- ◆ Know your horse's normal body temperature
- ◆ Fence horses away from streams/ponds
- ◆ Clean water buckets/troughs often
- ◆ Turn barn lights off at night to keep insects from congregating and keep feed/water buckets away from light sources

If your horse has any of the symptoms of Potomac Horse Fever, do not wait to call us. The earlier treatment can be started, the better chance he/she will have at a full recovery.



Managing The Horse in Winter

Wintertime in the northeast brings along with it a need for increased conscientiousness regarding the care of your horse(s) health and environment. Blowing snow, frigid temperatures, frozen water buckets, and icy pastures can all increase the risk of injury or illness for your horse. Here are some important things to remember during the winter months:

- ◆ **Nutrition-** Increase the amount of clean, dust free hay you feed to help keep your horse warm. Roughage puts off heat during the digestion process, providing warmth from the inside. Be sure that your horse's teeth are in good shape too so he can properly chew his/her hay and grain. Always provide fresh, clean water too. Your horse may be less inclined to drink cold water in cold weather, inviting colic. There are many different commercially available heaters for buckets and water tanks. Wet mashes made with wheat bran can be fed to increase your horse's water consumption too.
- ◆ **Shelter and Blanketing** - One of the most basic needs of horses is shelter. It is important that they have somewhere to go that pro-

vides protection from snow, rain, and wind, but allows adequate fresh air and light.

Some horse owners will choose to blanket their horse(s) in the colder weather. It is important to be consistent with your blanketing routine. If your horse gets used to wearing a blanket be sure that he/she is not suddenly without it when the temperature drops. You should also be diligent about removing the blanket on warmer days so that he/she does not begin to sweat underneath it.

Make sure that if your horse will be outside with his/her blanket on that it is fully waterproof. Wearing a soggy cold blanket invites a lot of discomfort and potential for illness.

- ◆ **Shoeing-** A lot of horse owners will remove their horse's shoes for the winter months. Metal shoes and icy surfaces can be a dangerous combination, and snow tends to pack inside the rim of the shoe creating an uneven, slippery surface for the horse to stand on, adding stress to tendons and ligaments. If your horse lives primarily outside during the

winter, and his feet are strong and healthy enough to be shoeless, this may be the option for you.

Your horse will still need regular hoof trimming while he is bare-foot.

If you have access to an indoor riding arena and continue to exercise your horse during the winter months, you may consider having screw-in/drive-in studs or borium (droplets of tungsten carbide) put on his shoes for added traction when on icy surfaces.

If you have any questions or concerns about your horse's specific needs in the winter time, give us a call and a doctor will be happy to address those concerns for you.



Emergency Tips

Equine medical emergencies can be very stressful and require a need for preparedness.

- ◆ Always have the Veterinarians phone number available. Post it in your barn and house and save it in your cell phone contact list. Scrambling to locate a number can waste precious time in an emergency.

- ◆ Know your horse's normal vital signs (temperature, pulse, respiration), and how to take them. This information can be very helpful in evaluating an emergency.
- ◆ Have a first aid kit in your barn and trailer. At a minimum, it should include:

Bandaging material (sterile telfa pads, gauze sponges, white roll gauze, brown gauze, sheet cotton, Vetrap, Elastikon.

Povidone/ Iodine scrub for cleaning wounds

Thermometer

Banamine Paste

All of these items can be purchased from us. We would be happy to help you arrange a kit that best suits your unique situation.



To Our Valued Clients:

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We're on The Web!

www.battenkillequine.com

Deworming And Dental Care

We recommend a fall deworming with an Ivermectin product. Equimax is an excellent choice for this time of year as it has the broadest spectrum of activity against the parasites we commonly see. As well as activity against Bots, Round Worms, Pin Worms, and all stages of Strongyles, Equimax is effective in removing tapeworms. We also recommend a fecal examination once a year to monitor how your deworming program is working.

If your horse is enrolled in the Pfizer PreventiCare program, you must have us deworm he/she twice a year with Equimax/Equell. If you have questions about this program, please contact Nicole at the office or view the "PreventiCare" page on our website.

In preparation for the difficulties associated with the winter months, we recommend that you have your horses teeth examined and floated if necessary. Poor dental care is one of the primary causes of weight loss, especially in older horses.

