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Spring 2011 Newsletter

Spring Vaccination Special

Regular vaccinations are an important part of keeping your horse healthy. They help provide protection against diseases that can severely affect health and performance or may be potentially life-threatening. Schedule your spring vaccinations to keep your equine friends protected.

At Battenkill Veterinary Equine we recommend a spring vaccine protocol including the following immunizations:

- **5 Way Vaccine** (Eastern/Western Equine Encephalitis, Tetanus, Influenza, and Rhinopneumonitis)
- **Potomac Horse Fever and Rabies**
- **West Nile**
- **Intranasal Strangles**

In addition, a Coggin's test can be added .

Rabies vaccination is critical, as this area has seen an increase in rabid wildlife the past year. Several equine rabies cases were also identified. Horses must be vaccinated annually for rabies.

This is also a good time to have your horse's teeth checked.

Finally, please consult with one of our veterinarians to determine if performing a Lyme test would be a good choice for your horse this spring.

At Battenkill Veterinary Equine we have immense concern for the continued health of your horse.

Please discuss any concerns you may have with one of our veterinarians.

After vaccination, many horses show the following mild signs of an immune response..

- Localized muscle soreness
- Fever
- Decreased appetite
- Lethargy

Please call us if these signs continue longer than 12 hours.

Call immediately if your horse exhibits the following, more serious side effects.

- Hives
- Prolonged muscular swelling
- Difficulty breathing
- Colic
- Collapse

Overall, the risk of vaccine side effects is greatly outweighed by the protective benefits of vaccination.

Battenkill Veterinary Equine welcomes Dr. Benjamin Anderson to our practice.



Dr. Anderson is originally from Spring Green, Wisconsin, and attended Ross University for the first three years of veterinary school. He transferred to the University of Missouri for his final year and graduated with a Doctorate in Veterinary Medicine in 2009.

Dr. Anderson practiced in Tennessee for one year before moving to New York with his family and joining our practice. He has a special interest in lameness and preventative medicine.

Strategic Deworming

Our battle against internal parasites has changed. Previously, the greatest health risk was due to large strongyles. However, widespread use of dewormers has practically eradicated this type of parasite. Unfortunately, the remaining types of equine parasites are not all sensitive to available deworming medications, and tend to develop resistance more easily. Factors to be considered:

- Not all horses have equal immunity to parasites
- Horses with lowest immunity (highest egg loads) should be medicated
- Not all medications are effective against all parasites

Parasite Risk Assessment

Due to the individual differences in immunity and exposure risk, a program should be developed for each horse.

1. Provide a fecal sample in late March or April before deworming your horse.
 - *collect 2 fresh fecal balls; the test can be completed at our clinic
2. Many horses can be dewormed less frequently if they aren't shedding eggs, maybe only once or twice yearly.
3. For horses with higher fecal egg counts and increased risk assessment, we can design an effective, cost-saving program that addresses your horse's individual health needs.
4. Repeated fecal egg counts before and after deworming should be used to determine that a certain medication is effective.

We look forward to working with you to develop an individual parasite control program to keep your horses healthy.

Be Prepared for an Equine Health Emergency

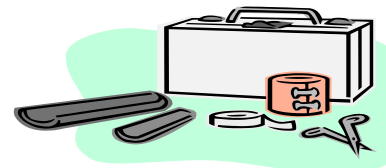
Preparation is vital when confronted with an equine medical emergency. Follow these guidelines from the American Association of Equine Practitioners (AAEP) to help you prepare for an equine emergency:

1. Keep our number **518-692-2000** near each phone to reach our doctors 24 hours a day.
2. Know in advance the most direct route to an equine hospital in case referral becomes necessary.
3. Make sure your trailer is always ready for hauling. If you don't have a trailer, have phone numbers available of people who could ship your horse. Call the clinic if you need names of some local horse shippers.
4. Post the names and numbers of nearby friends who can assist you while you wait for the veterinarian.
5. Prepare a first aid kit and make sure that all barn users know where the kit is. It's a good idea to keep a second first aid kit in your truck or trailer, and a smaller version to carry along if trail riding.

List of essential items for first aid kit:

- Sheet cottons
- Gauze pads
- Cling wrap
- Diapers/absorbent padding
- Scissors
- Betadine scrub
- Saline solution
- Zinc oxide ointment (protect sunburn or wounds)
- Epsom salts
- Antibiotic ointment
- Electrolytes
- Latex gloves
- Clippers
- Rectal thermometer
- Stethoscope
- Anti-inflammatory medication (Banamine, Bute)

Prevention is key for many equine emergencies. Evaluate your horse's environment and remove potential hazards. Rehearse your emergency action plan. Don't be worried about overreacting or bothering your veterinarian. We're here to provide care and help your horse in whatever way necessary.



Foals, Foals, Foals

“While foaling is of course a natural process that mares are designed for, it is not always a flawless one.”

It's foaling season again! This is a very busy time of year for breeding facilities and the doctors and staff at our practice. Foaling out mares is very exciting, sometimes nerve-wracking, and always a time when it is necessary to pay extra close attention to all of the details! While foaling is of course a natural process that mares are designed for, it is not always a flawless one. Problems can occur for the mare and/or the foal; speedy and knowledgeable attention to any abnormalities is of utmost importance for the health of both the mare and the foal.

Before foaling:

The gestation period of normal pregnancies can range anywhere from 315 to 365 days, but is typically around 340. The mare should be fully vaccinated 4-6 weeks prior to due date to improve colostrum. Muscles around the tail head become soft 2-4 weeks before foaling. The vulva relaxes and elongates and the udder begins to fill. Sometimes the mare will show slight signs of “uneasiness” for about the last two weeks before foaling. Waxing of the teats usually occurs 24-48 hours prior. (You will see sticky droplets on the ends of the teats.) It is possible that your mare may leak some milky fluid an hour to a

day before parturition. Call us immediately if you notice any abnormalities in these early signs.

During Labor:

There are three distinct stages of labor that you should be able to recognize and time. The first lasts 2-24 hours; you will notice the abdomen appears more concave above the flank and behind the ribs. Uterine contractions cause nervousness, erratic eating, sweating, pacing, etc. If your mare appears abnormally uncomfortable and you think she is showing signs of colic, contact us right away. The second stage lasts up to 30 minutes; delivery will occur shortly after the water ruptures. You should see two front feet, one slightly ahead of the other, soles down, and the nose tucked between, around the knees.

Call us immediately if you see : only one foot or more than 2 feet; feet upside down; no nose; a nose and no feet; or red tissue (placenta) prior to foaling. A malpositioned foal is an emergency situation that requires prompt veterinary attention! The sac will typically break as the foal emerges but if it does not, open it to free the foal and wipe the nose and mouth. Allow a normally breathing foal to lay with the mare until you see the blood in the umbilical cord

cease to pulse. At this time you may cut the umbilical cord, about three inches from the body, dip the stump in and antiseptic (Povidone/Iodine solution) and clamp it close to the body. Vigorously rub a nonbreathing foal with clean towels to stimulate it until it begins to breathe. The third and final stage of foaling is when the placenta is passed.. Before it passes, the placenta that is hanging from the mare should be tied up to prevent her from stepping on it and tearing it. If she has not passed it in two hours, call us right away. Once the placenta passes, a thorough examination should be performed by the veterinarian to be certain that the mare did not retain any of it. Any amount of retained placenta is harmful to the mare. The mare should be cleaning the foal and it should be trying to rise at this point. The foal should be on it's feet and nursing no more than 2 hours post delivery. An enema should be administered to the foal to aid in the passing of the meconium (feces). **If you suspect any problems or anything seems abnormal during foaling please contact us immediately.** A veterinary exam should be performed within 18-24 hours.



DEALING WITH SCRATCHES

“Scratches” (pastern dermatitis) is a common condition, often seen as crusts and peeling, cracking skin in the back of a horse’s pastern. There are a variety of conditions that could be causing the physical signs of scratches, including bacterial, fungal or mite infection. Systemic conditions related to the immune system can also cause vasculitis resulting in scratches.

In general, improvement should be seen after the following treatment is initiated:

- Remove the horse from a wet environment
- Clip the hair
- Gently clean the area with chlorhexidine (Nolvasan) and dry it thoroughly. Repeat every other day.
- Topical ointments may be indicated, depending on severity. Consult your veterinarian.

If the dermatitis is painful, limited to white legs, or extends higher up the leg, you should call your veterinarian. These could be signs of vasculitis, which may get worse with aggressive scrubbing. Also, please call if the scratches are not responding to treatment or appear to get worse at any time.



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To Our Valued Clients:

www.battenkillequine.com

**Battenkill Equine would like to thank
you for your continued trust in us.
Best wishes for a safe and happy 2011!**

Did you know that your horse chews 40,000 times per day on average?

It is always a good time to think about the health of your horse’s mouth!

- Have your horse’s wolf teeth been removed?
Wolf teeth can be a major source of discomfort in a horse that is ridden or driven with a bit.
- Is your older horse losing weight?
A horse’s teeth show significant wear by their 20th birthday. We recommend having a dental exam to identify abnormal or uneven wear.
- Has your young horse (3-4 years) been checked for retained caps?
Some horses have deciduous teeth that don’t fall out and need to be removed.
- Has your horse ever choked or colicked?
Make sure that your horse is able to chew food properly to avoid these emergencies.
Please call to schedule a dental exam if you have any concerns that your horse’s mouth may not be working to its full potential.