

AUTUMN 2021



EQUINE NEWSLETTER



COVID-19 UPDATE

We are now able to allow one person at a time into our reception areas. Please remember to call your orders in at least 48 hours in advance of collecting. If you have an upcoming visit and anyone in your household is displaying symptoms of COVID-19 please contact the office to rearrange your visit.

WINTER WORMING

Appropriate parasite control going into the winter is always very easily forgotten with horses often missing winter worming practices altogether. Whilst pasture contamination is minimal over the colder season parasites are continuing to hide out within your horses guts, increasing their risk of disease in the Spring.

The major parasite to be aware of is small redworm or cyathostomin. In their larval stage these worms camp out in the wall of the horse's intestine over the winter, emerging on mass in the spring and causing severe colic, weight loss, diarrhoea and even death in extreme cases. A blood test is available to look for presence of these worms but is only suitable for use in certain cases. Follow our flow chart to assess your horse's eligibility.

Tapeworm is not detectable on routine faecal worm egg counts and therefore needs a specific blood or saliva test to detect infestation. This test can only be used if your horse has not received a tapeworm treatment (Praziquantel or Pyrantel) within the last 4 months due to persistence of antibodies and the risk of a false positive result.

Bot flies can also be treated in the winter. Once ingested eggs hatch into larvae and burrow into the tongue and gums for 1 month. After this they migrate to the stomach and attach to the lining hiding out here for up to 10 months before being passed out in the faeces. Routine winter worming will be effective against these stages of botfly, however these larval stages will rarely cause disease in the horse.

We are pleased to offer the above tests at the following prices:

-Redworm test, collection of blood sample: £55 (inc VAT)*

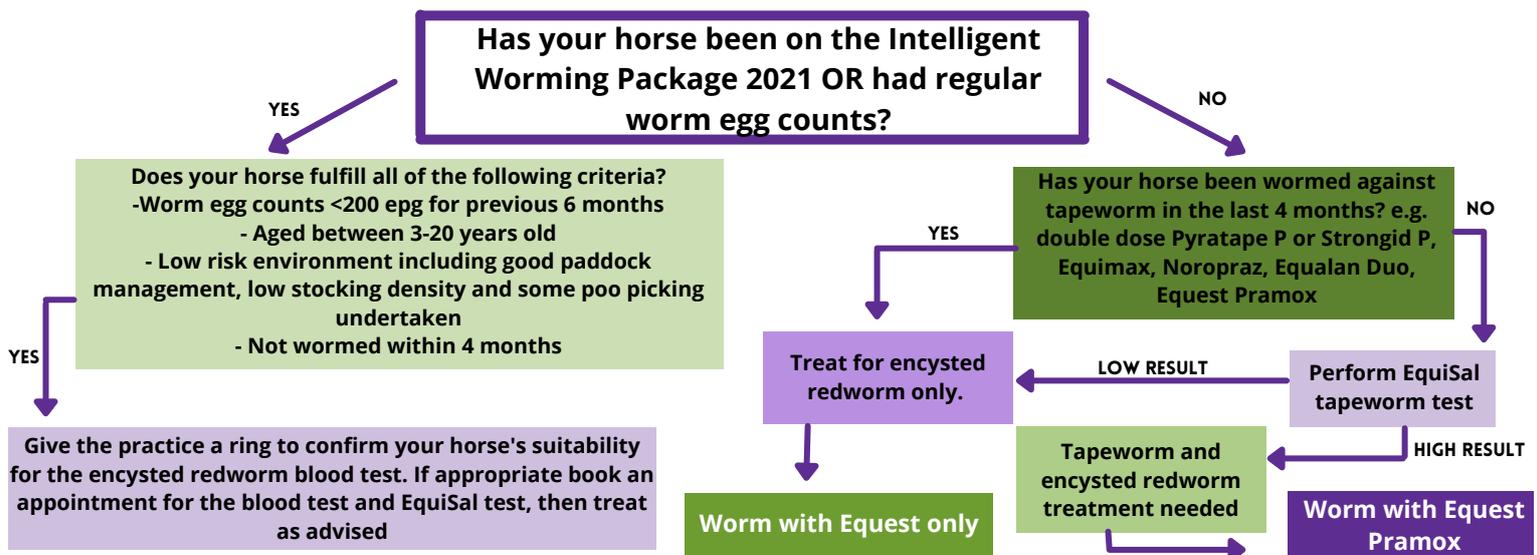
-Redworm test, collection of blood sample & EquiSal saliva test: £72 (inc VAT)*

-EquiSal Saliva test only: £18.95 (inc VAT) *

*does not include a visit charge

Follow our winter worming flow chart to determine your horse's worming requirements. Saliva tapeworm tests can be ordered from each office.

Speak to the office for more information.



HEREFORD: 01432 351471 • BROMYARD: 01885 488440 • LEDBURY: 01531 806129

Vets: Dominic Alexander • Will Allman • Mike Bellamy • Hazel Birch-Ellis • Ellie Collins • Andrew Cooke • Joel Galloway • Nick Gibbon • James Hipperson • Louise Lafin • Bill Main • Hannah Mitchell • Anotine Premont • Matthew Pugh • Caroline Rank • Harry Walby • Charlotte Watkins • Sarah Watson

Support staff: Jasmine Chapman • Megan Corrick • Sadie Davies • Michelle Harris • Lucy Hughes • Sybil Legge • Laura Langford • Alice Mainwaring • Ros O'Sullivan • Sophie Powell • Sharon Powell • Andrea Smith • Pam Strange • Vicky Tully • Millie Whitlock • Katherine Whistance • Evelyn Williams

WINTER COLIC: HOW TO REDUCE THE RISKS

Unfortunately colic does not have a schedule calendar and any horse can be affected by colic at any time of year. However, certain types of colic are more common during the winter months.

The most common type of colic associated with the winter months are impaction colics. Impactions usually consist of food material that has accumulated in a section of the horses' digestive tract causing a blockage. These blockages can occur in several places along the digestive tract, from the oesophagus (choke), stomach, small intestine, caecum and large colon.

Medical conditions in horses often have multiple factors and impaction colics are no different. However, there are some factors in the winter months that may play a part in increasing the chances of a colic occurring.

Dehydration:

Impactions are more likely to occur with dry feed, and horses tend to consume less water in the winter. As simple as it may seem frozen water troughs are the main cause for a reduction in water intake. Water buckets can freeze within 6-12 hours after filling meaning the buckets you fill in the morning and evening are only truly available for a limited time. Water temperature can also prevent horses from wanting to drink the >50 litres a day they require.

So owners should aim to stop the water from freezing by using insulation and to add moisture to their diet through soaked hay, soakable mashes and extra water in their feed.

Longer stabling hours:

As with horses on box rest, colic is more likely to occur in horses stabled for long periods of time. The physical activity of just walking around not only helps get those guts moving but horses out at grazing are also trickle feeding their digestive tract with small manageable meals. Studies have shown that a horses gut motility significantly decreases in the first 5 days after switching from open grazing to stabling. The best way to mitigate the risk of this is to try and keep your horses turned out as much as possible. If this is not feasible then there are other ways to help your horse to exercise and move more such as providing several small hay piles rather than one large hay pile or even turning them out in an arena for a few hours to get them moving.

Forage:

As grass dies back hay becomes the forage replacement of choice for many owners. The best way to feed hay to your horses is by using slow feeders. If a horse becomes accustomed to being fed twice a day with hay their guts will slow their emptying as they wait for their next meal, kind of like when 12 o'clock hits and your stomach begins to grumble. Slow feeders allow the closest mimic of grazing we can give our horses during winter and for poor doers, slowly introducing energy dense forage can help increase the calories and limit the volume of concentrate that is required to reach your horses calorie intake goal.

For horses kept on sandy soil, the reduction in grass can mean horses uptake sand into their guts which can be difficult to pass and cause further blockage. We recommend feeding Psyllium Fibre to horses grazed on sandy land to help reduce the amount of sand accumulating in the bowel.

Worm control:

Good worming and worm control measures, faecal egg counts and serum and saliva tests during the autumn and winter months can help determine the wormers needed for your horse based on the burden of each parasite. Faecal egg counts mean that you are not giving your horse chemicals when they don't need them but they also have a major role to play in preventing resistance. Using wormers when your burden is low increases the chances of parasites becoming immune to the medications we have to offer. Please refer to the flow chart on page 1 to see which winter worming regime is best for your horse.

REPEAT PRESCRIPTIONS

Please remember that we require at least 48 hours notice for repeat prescriptions. All requests must be checked and approved by our vets before they can be dispensed. In some cases there may be a need to discuss your order with a vet before it can be dispensed. Please order your repeat prescriptions in plenty of time to avoid disappointment.



BELMONT FARM & EQUINE VETS

Follow us on Facebook to keep up with with what our vets are doing out and about, virtual client evenings and our latest offerings.

Emergencies and Out of Hours

In the unfortunate event that your animal requires veterinary attention out-of-hours please dial the usual office number where you will be given the telephone number of the on-duty vet.

It may be useful to keep a pen and paper handy to take this number down.

On the rare occasion that the duty vet is out of reception your call will be forwarded to a helpful member of our answering service who will ensure someone attends the emergency as soon as possible.

The answering team at Phoneta can be contacted directly on 01432 381 440, if for any reason you are unable to reach the duty vet.

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