



U of M Horse Newsletter

Providing research-based information to Minnesota Horse Owners

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Volume 1, Issue 9

December 2005



Horse Owner Education Programs By: Krishona Martinson

The University of Minnesota is offering five regional horse owner education programs throughout Minnesota in 2006. Each program offers unbiased, researched based information and knowledgeable speakers identified specifically for that region by a committee of local horse experts and enthusiasts. Speakers for these programs include University of Minnesota faculty and staff as well as local veterinarians and horse professionals. Programs are held on Saturdays and begin at 10:00 am (registration at 9:30 am) and end at 3:00 pm. The programs are for educational purposes only and no vendors will be present. The dates, locations and topics are as follows:

- February 18th, 2006. Winona, MN. Town and County Vet Clinic. Topics include: pasture management, recreational trail riding, first aid, chiropractic 101, halter horses, dentistry, bits 101, stable vices, savvy horse

selection, equine law, western pleasure, national animal ID and micro-chipping demonstration.

- February 25th, 2006. Cambridge, MN. Cambridge Middle School. Topics include: pre-purchase exams, trailer safety, vaccinations and deworming, driving, tack fitting, 1st aid, fly and pest control, hay, pasture management, nutrition and hoof care.

- March 4th, 2006. St. Paul Campus. College of Veterinary Medicine. Topics include: wound management, 1st aid and bandaging, nutrition, buying hay, specialty care, and demonstrations and tours of neonatal and colic intensive care units, surgery, diagnostic imaging and high speed treadmill. Online registration available (this location only) at www.cvm.umn.edu/outreach

- March 11th, 2006. Norwood, MN. Norwood Young-America High School. Topics include:

hay 101, foaling 101, lameness, first aid, pasture management, poisonous plants, trail riding destinations, & trailer safety

- March 18th, 2006. Fergus Falls, MN. Red Horse Ranch Arena. Topics include: nutrition, diseases, recreational trail riding, vaccinations and deworming, pasture management, supplements, hay, hoof care, tack fitting, pre-purchase exams, horsemanship demonstrations, chiropractic and dentistry.

Pre-registration is required for all programs. The cost to attend each program is \$25.00/person which includes lunch and printed materials. For more information visit www.extension.umn.edu/horse. Please contact Kristi at 763-767-3837 or 888-241-0719 or marti987@umn.edu to register or if you have additional questions.

Ask The Expert

By: Marcia Hathaway, PhD, U of M

Q: How warm should my water be during the winter to help ensure my horses drink enough?

A: To maximize water intake, water temperature should be between 45 -65 degrees F. To help maintain water temperature, it is a good idea to house the water source inside a barn or lean-to if possible. If the water source needs to be outside, make sure the water source is protected from the wind and freezing rain and/or snow.

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Up Coming Events

Visit the website for additional information

February 18th, 2006
Horse Owner Education Day
Winona, MN
9:30 am -3:00 pm
Contact Kristi at
763-767-3837

February 25th, 2006
Horse Owner Education Day
Cambridge, MN
9:30 am -3:00 pm
Contact Kristi at
763-767-3837

March 4, 2006
Hands-on Horse Day at the
U of M in St. Paul.
Online registration available at
www.cvm.umn.edu/outreach

March 11th, 2006
Horse Owner Education Day
Norwood, MN
9:30 am - 3:00 pm
Contact Laura at
952-466-5300

March 18th, 2006
Horse Owner Education Day
Fergus Falls, MN
9:30 am - 3:00 pm
Contact Kristi at
763-767-3837



A bone scan uses radioactive tracers to detect areas of bone injury. Evidence of abnormalities shows up either as darker "hot spots" with greater tracer uptake or as lighter, "cold spots" with little or no tracer uptake. Hot spots represent increased bone metabolism while cold spots indicate decreased bone metabolism. The radioactivity generated in the body by the tracers is less than that of a chest x-ray

Bone Scans

By: Florian Jenner, DVM, U of M

and generally disappears within one to three days. The radionuclide used in horses is the same as tracers used for people, therefore they have been extensively tested for safety. Bone scan is used in subtle lameness, for horses who are lame in more than one leg or in horses whose lameness is located in the

upper leg and could not be localized using nerve and joint blocks to help pinpoint areas of bone injury. While x-rays can detect changes in bone, bone scans can detect changes in bone smaller than one billionth of a milligram, and can therefore show problems before they are visible by x-ray. Also,

because the tracers are given intravenously, it is consequently distributed throughout the entire body and it is much easier and cost effective to perform a bone scan of a full body than to take x-rays of all body parts in horses who have multiple limb lameness or very subtle problems.

Strangles is a highly contagious bacterial infection caused by *Streptococcus equi*. It can be spread by horse-to-horse contact or when humans, tack, drinking troughs, etc. becoming contaminated with the pus or nasal discharge from affected horses. Horses that have not been exposed to the bacteria in recent years are particularly susceptible because their immunity usually declines over time. Early signs of Strangles include fever (Temperature > 102 F), depression and a nasal discharge which progresses from clear to thick and yellow. A few days later most horses develop painful swelling of the lymph nodes under the jaw, which form abscesses that eventually rupture and discharge pus. Many veterinarians prefer not to use antibiotics on uncomplicated cases and advocate hot packs applied to the lower jaw to help abscesses mature to a point where they can safely be

Strangles

By: Jeremy Frederick DVM, U of M

opened. Once open, the abscess cavities may be flushed with dilute povidone-iodine solutions until they heal. Treating these uncomplicated cases with antibiotics is rarely necessary and may delay abscesses from maturing. Horses usually recover fully after rupture of these abscesses. A diagnosis of Strangles is confirmed when *S equi* is identified from swabs. A more serious condition arises in some horses that develop noticeable swelling in lymph nodes in the throatlatch area. These horses are often very reluctant to eat due to pain and may stand with their head outstretched and nose poked forward to aid in breathing. The term "Strangles" was coined because of the potential for lymph nodes to compress the upper airway. Horses with these symptoms need immediate veterinary attention and require a more

aggressive treatment approach. Antiinflammatories and antibiotics such as penicillin should be given and the horse may need a referral to a veterinary hospital to keep their airway open and the horse well hydrated. If Strangles is identified on a farm, it is important to set up a management protocol and isolate all the horses with symptoms to one area. To attempt to prevent spread of infection, this area should have separate farm utensils and grooming equipment. All organic material (feed, manure, bedding) should be completely cleaned from contaminated areas and kept away from unaffected horses. Equipment, stables, fences, trailers, etc. should be thoroughly disinfected using a phenolic disinfectant. Clothes should be changed and hands washed prior to handling other healthy horses on the farm. Several measures can help to decrease the likelihood and

spread of Strangles. Intramuscular and intranasal vaccines are available. These vaccines often decrease the severity of the symptoms in infected horses but do not always completely prevent the disease from occurring. Ideally, new horses entering a farm should be isolated for 2-3 weeks and their temperatures checked regularly. Any horse with a high temperature, nasal discharge, difficulty in swallowing, or swollen glands should have their throat or guttural pouch swabbed for the *S equi* bacteria. Unfortunately, some horses become symptomless carriers of Strangles and harbor the bacteria in their guttural pouches. This is probably the most important cause of recurring infection on some farms. To identify chronic carriers, several collections of swabs are necessary.