



Spring 2015

Crossroads Equine Veterinary Services, LLC

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The Crossroads Quarterly

What's New?

I hope everyone has had a great start to 2015. It is going by so fast. There are a lot of exciting changes and additions at Crossroads Equine this year. Stay tuned.

We will be having a **coggins and vaccination clinic** at Saddle Pals in Soddy Daisy on Saturday March 14, 2015 from 10am-2pm. Call or e-mail with questions.

We are also having a **coggins and vaccination clinic** at Catoosa County Saddle Club on March 28th from 9am-1pm.

As a reminder, we have a new **emergency number**. If you have an after-hours emergency, you can call **423-637-4625**. This number will forward to the doctor on call.

Like us on Facebook. The link is www.facebook.com/#!/pages/Crossroads-Equine-Veterinary-Services/113768701969304 or search for Crossroads Equine Veterinary Services.

As always, if you have a topic that you would like to see covered in a future issue, please e-mail it to me at crossroadsequinevet@gmail.com.

Service Spotlight

When we perform an exam on your horse before June 15, 2015, you can receive a rebate coupon for \$5 when you vaccinate with both WEST NILE-INNOVATOR® and FLUVAC INNOVATOR® products; plus, receive an additional \$2 when you deworm with QUEST® (moxidectin) Gel or QUEST PLUS (moxidectin/praziquantel) Gel.

In keeping with our commitment to provide excellent patient care and outstanding service, we are excited to introduce you to your newly redesigned **Horse Owner Portal!** This portal offers you 24/7 access to your horse's medical information, as well as access to an extensive library of educational tools related to horse health. There are many informative articles and videos that you will have access to. There is also an **interactive horse!** We hope you will take some time to explore all the great features available at your fingertips! You can access it from the website at

www.crossroadsequinevet@gmail.com. Click on the link under pet portals and register. The system is live at this time. At some point in the near future, the portal should offer direct access to your coggins certificates as well. However, there is a issue in the system that we are working out. All other functionality is working properly. There will be an official welcome e-mail to come out in the coming days to introduce the new system.

We are excited to announce that we have updated our Digital Radiography system to a **New Wireless DR system**. In keeping with our commitment to offer the most up-to-date diagnostic capabilities in



the area, we have added a totally wireless DR digital radiography system. The new system is much more efficient and

has tremendous image quality. The software also has very useful image manipulation functions. No need to even have power outlets any more!

Reminders

New grass will be coming soon. If you have a horse that has previously had a bout of laminitis or is a chronic founder case, gradual or limited turnout onto fresh grass would be advised to try and prevent relapse. Horses that are obese or in a state of insulin resistance are also at risk. Also horses kept in a stable all of the time will need similar precautions. Year after year, it seems like the last week of March and the first couple of weeks of April, we see the largest number of cases. If you have any questions or concerns, don't hesitate to give me a call.

The warm season is near. Mosquitoes will be here soon. Make sure your horse is protected against the diseases commonly spread by these insects. Vaccinate for Eastern and Western Encephalitis and West Nile Virus.

Show season is quickly coming upon us. Schedule an appointment to get a performance dental for your horse. There are several things that can be causing your horse problems that may not be evident on the outside. Just because your horse isn't dropping grain or losing weight doesn't mean that his performance or his feed efficiency isn't suffering. Call or e-mail with questions.

Foaling season is here. We prefer you to let us know when you think foaling is close, so we can be expecting it. If you are present when the water breaks, call us at that time. There is a limited amount of time to get the foal on the ground and it be healthy. If we can get to your farm and the foal isn't on the ground yet, we need to be there, because something is wrong. If you're not present for the birth, we still like a call when your foal is born. The practice offers a **new foal/mare exam**. A thorough exam is performed on the new mother and foal to look for potential problems. Also we can check the foal's blood for adequate transfer of antibodies through the colostrum to make sure that the immune system is strong. Call for details.

Disease Spotlight

COLIC

The term "colic" simply means abdominal pain. There are many causes of colic and symptoms range from very mild to violent.

What are the symptoms?

A horse with colic will show varying symptoms depending on the cause of the colic, how long it has been present and the stoicism of the patient. Mild colic symptoms include dullness, curling up of the top lip, adopting a 'straining to urinate' stance and lying quietly. Severe colic pain can cause a horse to



Horse rolling with abdominal pain i.e. colic

roll and throw itself about in an uncontrolled and dangerous manner.

What causes colic?

Colic can be due to something as simple as a gut 'spasm' resulting from a change in diet or routine i.e. a digestive upset or as serious as twisting of a part of the intestine with consequent strangulation of its blood supply. The more common causes include impaction (where the intestine becomes clogged with semi-digested food material), displacement of a segment of bowel from its normal position, torsion or twisting, strangulation through hernias or holes, strangulation by fatty tumors wrapping around them and other causes of obstruction.

How is colic treated?

Different types of colic require different treatments, so an accurate diagnosis is the first step. Simple large colon impactions usually respond to treatment by lubrication with oil, electrolytes and water given by stomach tube. Many cases respond quickly to analgesics (pain killers) such as 'Buscopan' (a spasmolytic) and Banamine or Bute. Some cases require urgent aggressive treatment - either medical or surgical, if the horse's life is to be saved.

There are some colic's that can only be treated by surgery to correct the underlying problem.



Intestines of a horse with colic at laparotomy (abdominal surgery). The darker intestines have had their blood supply damaged (strangulated).

What should I do if my horse has colic?

Call your veterinarian immediately and explain the symptoms. Persistent severe pain usually indicates a serious problem and an emergency situation. If possible, keep the horse walking but do not attempt to take the horse out of its stable if it is in uncontrollable pain. Remember that the key to success with colic is early diagnosis and treatment. It is better that the horse has recovered when the veterinarian arrives rather than at "death's door" after waiting too long before seeking help.

How can a vet tell what is causing the colic?

In addition to straightforward clinical examinations of the horse's behavior, attitude, temperature, pulse and respiratory rates and mucous membrane color, veterinary investigations such as rectal examination, taking blood and peritoneal (abdominal) fluid samples, ultrasound scanning and passing a stomach tube can all give indications of the type and severity of the problem. It is not always easy to establish the exact problem and in some cases, surgery is needed to allow examination of the abdominal cavity (exploratory laparotomy) to pinpoint the abnormality as well as to allow correction or treatment. In many cases your veterinarian will quickly determine whether your horse is 'surgical' or not, and recommend the appropriate action, which maybe referral to a specifically experienced veterinary clinic. In all



Redworm larvae at the root of intestinal arteries.

cases, the earlier the decision can be made as to whether medical or surgical treatment is needed and that treatment is begun, the better the horse's chance of survival.

Can I prevent my horse from getting colic?

To a certain extent - Yes. Regular worming to prevent damage to the intestine and its blood supply helps enormously. Keeping to a routine and avoiding sudden changes in management and feed type also helps. Horses and particularly their intestines are creatures of habit. Changes should be made gradually and carefully. Horses who are injured or having a break from exercise should not be bedded on straw. Many will eat their bedding and their large intestines will become impacted with this. This can be prevented by bedding them on shavings, paper or other non-edible materials. They should have unlimited access to drinking water and, if possible, some exercise. Nevertheless, some cases of colic are neither preventable nor predictable. You must be alert to any changes in your horse or pony's health.

Practice News

Wellness Program

This practice recommends a yearly dental exam, leveling, and coggins test. A vaccination program can be tailored for your individual situation. We also recommend a strategic deworming program. Wellness Profile Testing can be an important part of managing the health of your horse. Visit www.crossroadsequinevet.com for more information.

Deworming Program

Are you tired of wondering what dewormer to use? Are you tired of thinking about when you last dewormed or if it is time? Give us a call and we can help.

If you have a friend who would like to receive this newsletter, please e-mail me at crossroadsequinevet@gmail.com. As always, thanks for supporting Crossroads Equine