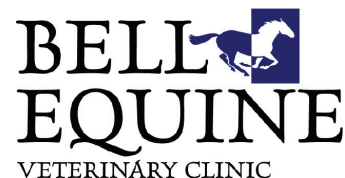




# WINTER 2009 NEWSLETTER



## BELL EQUINE NEWS

### NEW YEAR STAFF SHUFFLE

Emmanuel Engeli, who is known to many of you as our orthopaedic surgeon, is moving on to work at the University of Cambridge Veterinary School, where he is going to head their equine team. He has worked very hard for three years here diagnosing and treating many of our more challenging lameness cases. We wish him and his wife all the very best in East Anglia, especially in April when their first baby is due.

In Emmanuel's place we will have the familiar faces of Luisa Smith and Jonathan Withers back in the hospital, both of whom are already known to you as they have been here as residents over the past three years. We look forward to having them both back later in the spring in addition to our normal team to help look after all your equine problems. If you wish to make an appointment or have any questions, please contact our hospital administrator on 01622 813700.



Jonathan Withers and Luisa Smith

### MORE EXPERTISE

Two of our qualified equine nurses, Terri Malyon and Kelly Russell have recently passed another examination designed for your benefit. This is the Equine SQP (Suitably Qualified Person) examination, which means that they are better informed for providing advice on what treatment is best for your horses. Both Terri and Kelly will also be able to give information on worming programmes for different yards depending on your individual circumstances.



Left to right: Terri Malyon and Kelly Russell

### WISHING YOU A VERY HAPPY, HEALTHY AND SUCCESSFUL 2009 FROM ALL AT BELL EQUINE

Our New Year's resolution for 2009 is to continue to meet all your equine veterinary requirements, ranging from the most reasonably priced vaccination to a complex colic surgery. Within our practice we offer the complete range of state-of-the-art veterinary facilities and expertise, so that we can solve as many of your equine problems as possible in the New Year. If you have any concerns or questions, please contact any of the vets or our reception staff on 01622 813700. We hope that 2009 will be a **good new year** for all!

### AND FINALLY...

We would like to take this opportunity to remind clients that we offer a 10% discount for immediate payment at the time of service either by cash, cheque, credit or debit card. Alternatively a 5% discount is available if payment is received within 15 days of receiving an invoice. In recognition of the current credit crunch, we are doing our bit to help you by keeping our visit and vaccination costs the same in 2009. We have not increased these fees in three years!

**BELL EQUINE VET CLINIC**  
Mereworth, Maidstone, Kent ME18 5GS

For **general enquiries and all visits**,  
Tel: 01622 813700

For **hospital appointments**,  
please phone Linda Loines on  
01622 816032 or 01622 813700

For **account queries**, please contact  
Pat Oram on 01622 816033 or  
01622 816036

## MICROCHIPPING



### CHIPS WITH EVERYTHING!

Traditionally we have used a written description of colour and markings such as whorls to identify an individual horse. Times are changing, technology is advancing and now microchips are a far simpler way to identify any horse and link it with its passport and other papers. A microchip provides a unique form of tamper-proof identification even if a horse is separated from its papers, which is especially useful for recovering lost and stolen horses.

This year the EU is introducing compulsory microchipping of foals born after 1st July 2009. The requirement will not be retrospective for older horses that have passports, but our advice is that, unless your horse or pony really hates needles, microchipping is well worth doing.

The procedure is very straightforward and involves a tiny microchip (about the size of a grain of rice) being implanted on the left side of the horse's neck. The chips are very safe and, unlike in dogs and cats, they remain in position and cannot migrate around the body.

We strongly recommend chipping as a guaranteed form of identification and have designed our computer records to include the microchip number of our patients. To encourage you to have your horses and ponies microchipped we are running a special '**CHIPS WITH EVERYTHING**' offer, so that for the next 3 months it will cost **£20 + VAT** to microchip each individual animal. This includes the cost of the microchip and lifelong registration on a central database. If you would like to have this done, please contact our reception staff on 01622 813700.





## STRATEGIC WORMING



Left to right: Roundworms and Tapeworms

### EQUINE WORM RISK ASSESSMENT

We have been using faecal worm egg counts (FWEC) to monitor the levels of parasite infections in the horses and ponies under our care increasingly over the past year with very good results. The FWEC can be an effective way to measure the level of mature equine worms (including redworms and ascarids) in a horse. It is a relatively simple procedure that requires a small amount of input from the horse owner. We have found it to be the most useful method of risk assessment and it may reduce the incidence of colic in yards where it is being done regularly.

To do this we need you to provide a small amount of your horse's droppings, normally about 10g - (less than one dollop!) The sample should be as fresh as possible and is best taken to the clinic rather than posted, especially in the summer. Samples should be collected into a resealable

container, like a plastic sandwich bag, and need to be labelled clearly with the animal's name and owners' details. If you are collecting samples from numerous horses (more than 5), it is best to book in advance with our receptionists on **01622 813 700** as processing a whole yard's worth of samples is time-consuming.

We will examine each sample individually under a microscope and then telephone you with an accurate report regarding the number of worm eggs present, and explain what this means and how to treat any worm burden that has been found. Tapeworms are not detected by routine worm egg counts, so a tapeworm blood test should be performed at least once a year. Often these tests will show that treatment is not required.

Unfortunately there is no available diagnostic test to determine if horses are carrying large burdens of 'encysted' (immature) small strongyles. Therefore, it is advisable that all young horses less than 5-years-old or others at particular risk are treated for this type of worm at least once a year, but the crucial thing is knowing what to give and when. Strategic testing can be of much more benefit than random interval dosing. The heavy use of wormers over the past 20 years has unfortunately led to a significant amount of worm resistance, which means that there is a major risk that some wormers are no longer effective on some yards. By monitoring the faecal worm egg counts of all horses on a yard at regular

intervals over the year, it is possible to target the use of wormers to the horses that actually need treatment. This will substantially reduce the risk of further resistance developing among the worms in those horses, and in many cases will save money by avoiding unnecessary worming.

We can also use faecal worm egg counts to assess the presence and severity of parasite resistance on your yard. By running worm egg count tests 10-14 days after worming, we can see how effective the wormer has been at killing the worms. In theory, all of the eggs should have gone. This is known as the 'faecal worm egg count reduction test'.

To help you get the worm menace under control on the spring grass, we are running a **special offer** on worm egg counts. We now charge **£8.90** per individual worm egg count and **£6.60** per sample for more than 5 samples. This fee includes our vets and trained nurses advising you on the best way to worm your horses using our individual knowledge of your horses and where they are kept, as well as awareness of all the worming products available and the risks of complications such as wormer resistance. Now is the right time of year to do this as winter is often the best time to treat your horses and ponies.

## A FEW MYTHS ABOUT WORMING ...ALL WRONG!

**X If you use wormers all the time worms shouldn't be a problem...WRONG!**

Some wormers are not effective against certain types of worms so there is no guarantee that your horse will remain worm free unless you choose the type of treatment carefully. Also it is important to treat all horses kept together at the same time unless worm egg counts/tapeworm blood tests show that individuals do not require treatment. A single infected horse that misses a treatment can rapidly infect others.

**X Removing droppings from the pasture is a chore and is no use against worms...WRONG!**

Removing faeces from the pasture is one of the most effective ways of minimising the build up of worms particularly on smaller pastures which are grazed intensively by many different horses.

**X Putting sheep and cattle on the pasture is harmful...WRONG!**

Sheep and cattle do have their own worms but these are not harmful to horses. Co-grazing sheep and cattle can be a useful way to minimise the build-up of worms that are potentially harmful to horses.

**X Horses should be kept in after they have been wormed...WRONG!**

- There is no evidence to suggest that this has any beneficial effect.
- Sudden changes in stabling and turnout can place horses at increased risk of colic.
- A better way is to maintain normal turnout routines and to ensure that faeces are picked up from the pasture regularly.

## THINKING OF BREEDING FROM YOUR MARE?



We are planning the 2009 breeding season already. If you are thinking of breeding from your mare, please do not hesitate to contact either Karen Coumbe or Jonathan Withers for advice or look at our web site for further information, especially all the details of our artificial insemination programme: [www.bellequine.com](http://www.bellequine.com)

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