



## THE RIVERS EQUINE VETS



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Q How do you spell 'hungry horse' in four letters? A. M T G G !



Call us when you need us on

Ph 02 6672 3898

Our Facebook Page [click here](#)



**For All Your Horse's  
Healthcare—give us a call!**

### The Rivers Equine Vets—October 2021 Newsletter!

With the weather warming up again, it is time for all those pesky parasites, bacteria, flies, mosquitoes, and more to raise from their slow winter doze and once again become the bane of the horse owner's life. Warm wet weather in spring can cause major hoof problems, noticeably laminitis which is a debilitating condition of the hoof. Wet grass and mud compound the problem. So now is the time to step up the pasture care and monitor your horse's health. Check daily that your horse is not injured or ill, and has an adequate supply of feed and water. Clean their hooves from the muddy ground, and keep their stall manure free. If you have any concerns at all, please give us a ring and we will be happy to help.

### Laminitis - Beware of Spring Grass.

Laminitis is by far the most dangerous potential consequence of turnout into spring pastures.

The abundance of the new grass may look healthy and will attract your horse who will proceed to chomp their way through the paddock. But these new grasses contain fructans. They cause the shift in microbial populations, upsetting the hindgut pH and producing endotoxins. These events lead to laminitis, an intensely painful and crippling condition of the structure within your horse's feet.

Laminitis causes severe inflammation of the soft tissue structures that attach the coffin pedal bone of the foot to the hoof wall. This can be extremely painful. The forelimbs are more prone to laminitis and are affected more than the hind limbs. If your horse is reluctant to move and adopts a 'sawhorse' stance where they rock their weight back off the most affected limbs, then they may have laminitis.

To avoid problems, you can try turning horses out into a paddock with minimal grass. You can also limit the grazing time to half an hour segments several times per day and gradually increase the number and length of these access times. Continue to offer hay to horses to provide a little fiber. Use grazing muzzles to limit the amount of grass that horses can consume and try turning them out into dry lots rather than stalls. Monitor hoof temperature (an unusually warm hoof surface is a danger sign) and call us if your horse shows signs of hoof discomfort such as a reluctance to move.

Laminitis is a debilitating condition and can even be fatal for your horse. Managing your horse with spring grass may be time-consuming, but it is in the best interest of your horse.

**Dental Care for Horses.** Dental checkups are essential for your horse. As your horse ages, the shape and angle of the teeth begin to change and that is when these changes start to cause problems. Being aware of these conditions and having a regular check up each year with a professional equine vet is the best way to manage your horse's dental care. Give us a call, [we can help](#). Disease in the body often starts in the mouth, so don't ignore your horses dental health.

**Tip**—Monitor the grass intake of your horse as spring grasses accumulate high amounts of fructans (sugar) which can lead to digestive issues, weight gain, and make them more prone to diseases such as laminitis. Graze on fresh grass on for a few hours each day, preferably first thing in the morning when the grass has a lower sugar level.



**Fly Control:** Insects are on the rise with warmer weather.

Flies are aggravating to horses. They disrupt normal grazing and rest times. Use fly traps outside stables, and fly sprays and wipes on the horse when riding. A fly mesh rug and / or a mask will protect your horse while keeping them cool during the warmer months. Keeping stalls and pastures manure free is vital and it will help if you keep water troughs clean.

***Wet ground plus mud = hoof problems. Daily hoof cleaning is a must in areas where mud is a constant concern and is important in keeping hooves healthy.***



**The Rivers Equine Vets**

**Dr. Greg Baldwin, Dr. Matt Mackee  
Dr. Simone McColgan**

**We are here to help you and your equine family - Phone 02 6672 3898**

## **Spring Wellness Check.**

It depends on the location where you live as to the type of vaccinations that your horse may need. We can advise you what your horse will require and how often it should be done. Some of the vaccinations your horses may need would be to protect against Tetanus, Strangles and Hendra. Worming requires frequent treatment to prevent a build up within the stomach and intestines. Removing the manure in the paddocks is a simple way to reduce worm contamination.

A regular check up is important to the long term good health of your horse. Call us today and we can advise about any issues you may have.

## **Manure Management.**

Removing the waste from stalls and riding areas helps to prevent parasites and diseases from incubating within the pile of manure. It is a good idea to have a routine and pick the manure up daily.

Harrowing the paddock can break up the clumps, exposing the parasites and insects to the air and sunlight which often eliminates the majority of them. This process allows the pasture to breathe and recover from use. Complete the process when your horses are rotated out of the paddock and allow 2-3 days to rest. The effort will be well worth it.

## **Artificial Insemination.**

The introduction of semen from a donor stallion to a mare when she is in estrus by artificial methods, allows superior sires to be available to more than just a few. The semen, either chilled or frozen (depending on availability and preference) can be stored and shipped.

With the help of a professional, your mare can be artificially inseminated and a quality foal will be on the way.

People often wonder how the process works. A plastic pipette is passed gently through the mares cervix and the semen is injected into the uterus. Needless to say, you want an expert to manage the process. The frozen semen must first be thawed in a water bath at a specific temperature before being administered.

The benefit of this process is that it eliminates the need for transporting a horse for breeding. A stallion can cover a much larger number of mares, and it permits the use of older, valuable stallions. The costs vary depending on the stallions history and how valuable they are. It does take time and requires a well trained specialist vet to carry out the care and oversee the fertilisation.

The Rivers Equine Vets can help you every step of the way.

Contact our office and talk to us for a more in depth discussion on whether it is right for your mare.

Please Visit Our Website—Click on the link below.

[www.theriversequinevets.com.au](http://www.theriversequinevets.com.au)