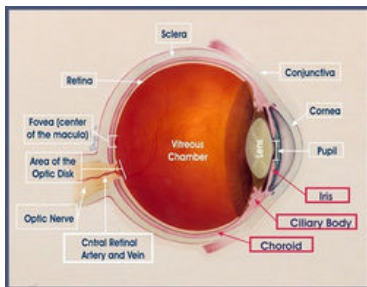




UVEITIS- DO YOU KNOW THE SIGNS?

Uveitis is defined as inflammation of the uvea, one of the layers of the eye. This layer contains most of the blood supply to the eye and includes three structures: the iris (the part of the eye that determines the colour of the eye), the ciliary body and the choroid.

This causes significant pain and can lead to blindness.



Treatment:

The aim of treatment is to control pain and reduce inflammation. We often achieve this with a combination of oral anti-inflammatories (Phenylbutazone and Flunixin), topical steroidal treatments and Atropine.

Often horses affected will need treatment for a number of weeks to prevent recurrence and development of Equine Recurrent Uveitis. For such cases a number of surgical options are available to include cyclosporine implants. Unfortunately some eyes will not respond to treatment and will require enucleation to remove the source of pain.

Consequences of Uveitis:

Uveitis is the leading cause of blindness in horses. A recent study from the USA showed that almost 30% of horses are already blind in the affected eye by the time they are first presented to a vet for examination.

Therefore it is vital that your horse's eyes are examined if you have any concerns about them.

This study also showed that around 30% of horses with uveitis had to be retired due to the condition, and another 30% performed at a reduced level than before the disease started. Sadly, 15% of horses had to be euthanased due to bilateral blindness or chronic, uncontrollable pain.

It can occur secondary to any other eye problem, such as an ulcer, infection or trauma. In these cases, the uveitis will be controlled by treatment of the initial issue. However, primary uveitis can also occur, reasons for this are largely still not understood. Some studies have suggested that *Leptospira* (a bacteria) may be a cause by directly infecting the eye or altering the immune system. There also appears to be a genetic component, with some breeds predisposed e.g. Appaloosa

Clinical signs :

- Ocular pain, often shown by a closed or semi closed eye.
- Increased ocular discharge
- Increased vasculature around the eye, the eye may look bloodshot
- A very small pupil (miosis)
- A milky or cloudy appearance to the eye (aqueous flare or corneal oedema)
- Material in the front chamber of the eye (blood or pus)

Prevention:

Often it is impossible to prevent the first episode of Uveitis, but swift treatment is key. If you know your horse is susceptible, then ensuring the eye is protected from UV light exposure with a UV fly mask or goggles is important.



If you are concerned about Uveitis please call the team today, 01584 841 080

NEDDIE NEWS

This month it is a slightly different Neddie News we meet Henry. Henry is Severn Edge Equine receptionist Kayleigh's lovely standard bred gelding. Henry was diagnosed with Uveitis back in 2020, Kayleigh explains a little more about how she manages Henry's condition.

"Henry seems to be doing really well currently and I am quick to catch his flare-ups before they become aggressive. I use Butaleve, Pred-forte drops and Bozmerix (sold by Hestevard for inflammation) to support me. I am unaware how much vision he has within the eye currently but Henry is happy and healthy otherwise and still his normal playful, cheeky self so Henry at the moment is a long way off enucleation.

Henry has very cool 100% UV goggles for ridden work and also must wear a 90+ UV protection mask in the field. Henry's main flare-ups seem to come from rain and wind, so I try my hardest to keep Henry's mask on him but some naughty horses have other ideas! There is no cure for this horrible disease unfortunately so all I can do is make Henry comfortable and treat when necessary. I am more than happy to chat about what has worked for us, so please give me a bell. Henry loves to jump and we do go out competing a lot, if you see him with his special goggles please come and say hello."





ATYPICAL MYOPATHY



Unfortunately, we are seeing an increase in the number of horses suffering from Atypical Myopathy this spring. Sycamore seedlings seem to be particularly prevalent and toxic this year. With spring now well and truly underway, please check your pastures for sycamore tree seedlings. Seedlings and fallen seeds contain a toxin called hypoglycin A (HGA) that can cause Atypical Myopathy (sycamore poisoning) in horses when ingested. The toxin HGA slows or stops energy production in muscles and the heart.

There are a number of things you can do to help prevent ingestion of sycamore seeds & seedlings, and therefore help to prevent Atypical Myopathy:

- Ideally move your horses to pasture where sycamore trees are not in danger of dropping seeds in the autumn or for seedlings to come up in the spring, although we are aware this is not always possible (the “helicopter” seeds can travel up to 200 yards). Alternatively, fence off any areas of the pasture where sycamore seeds have fallen or seedlings are starting to grow.
- Remove sycamore seeds from pastures and pull up (if possible) sycamore seedlings – seedlings should be carefully disposed of because dead seedlings (including seedlings killed using herbicides) are still poisonous.
- Provide supplementary hay/haylage, especially when grazing is poor. However, avoid leaving wet hay on the ground as this can increase the risk
- Provide supplementary concentrate feeding.
- Reduce time spent at pasture.

Not all horses on problem pastures are susceptible (probably depending on genetic factors), but currently it is not possible to tell which horses are high risk.

Atypical myopathy signs include:

- General weakness - difficulty walking and breathing
- Sudden collapse and inability to stand
- Depression - holding head low
- Muscle tremors / trembling
- Signs of colic (but often still have a good appetite)
- Brown or dark red urine

SEE THESE SIGNS?
Call us on 01584 841080



Blood tests can confirm the diagnosis. Sadly the disease is frequently fatal (over 50% of affected horses do not survive), especially if the horse becomes recumbent and unable to get up. However, treatment can be successful in mild cases and if started early enough – if horses survive the first few days then they have a higher chance of surviving, however full recovery can take several months.

If you suspect your horse is showing signs of Atypical Myopathy, please contact us immediately – remember that the earlier they can diagnose the disease and initiate treatment, the better the chances of survival.



CLIENT EVENING 18TH MAY

Marc Jerram, Master Farrier will be presenting an evening on
"The Farrier and Vet- A Teamwork Approach to Laminitis"
at The Punchbowl Inn , WV16 5NQ from 7pm

This is a free to attend event and we are excited to see you all there.

Please remember to call the office to book your place at the upcoming client evening.

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