

Flying Horse Veterinary Practice Spring Newsletter

Spring, or at least rain is in the air; snow is melted (for the moment) and it is time to think about riding again. Whether your horse actively competes or is just a pasture pet, he/she requires basic health maintenance including vaccinations, deworming and dental care. We hope to educate you on the best, and most economical ways to meet these basic needs, and much more. Money is tight for everyone, however sometimes investing up front may not only give your horse better care but save you cash in the long run. Keep reading to learn more.



Want to receive \$5 off of your horse's first veterinary visit with Dr. Snedden? Take 5 minutes and fill out a brief survey located on our website www.flyinghorsevet.com. While there, check out the News page for current events that may affect your horse's health, and Dr. Snedden's blog about the everyday life of an equine vet including tips to help you better care for your horse.

Invasion of the parasites:

We all know that horses need to be dewormed every 6-8 weeks. Right? Maybe not. While very young horses may need to be dewormed even more frequently, as horses age most develop some immunity to internal parasites and may not need to be dewormed as often.

In fact, 20% of the horse population produce 80% of the environmental parasites. If your horse falls into the other 80%, of moderate to low contaminators, he may only need to be dewormed twice per year, saving you both money on deworming products and time struggling to get the dewormer into your horse (and potentially wearing part of it). A simple fecal exam, performed at Flying Horse Veterinary Practice for \$20 can help determine if your horse would be a candidate for semi-annual deworming. Besides the effect on your pocketbook, the main reason for deworming based on fecal exams is an increasing resistance of strongyle larvae to several classes of dewormers due to indiscriminate use.

For more information on this growing problem, check out this link <http://www.myhorse.com/focus-your-deworming-efforts.html>



Equine strongyle eggs



Fast Facts from the Horse's Mouth

- 1) The horse's upper jaw is approximately 30% wider than his lower jaw.
- 2) Horses have teeth that are constantly erupting (2-3 mm annually) and being worn away.

Sometimes we learn pieces of trivia that are just that, trivial. Other times, we can put together a few pieces of apparently trivial knowledge (as above) and realize that it tells us something important. In this case, the two facts above should help you answer the question “Why should my horse have his teeth floated (or at least checked) annually?”

Let me explain...because the upper jaw is wider than the lower, the teeth don't sit directly on top of one another like in people. Instead, the inside edge of the upper teeth sits on the outside edge of the lower teeth. That uses fact 1. Now fact 2 said that the teeth are constantly erupting and being worn away, however the only parts that can be worn away are those parts that are touching (inside top and outside bottom), therefore it is common to get overgrowths of the outside edge of the top teeth and the inside edge of the bottom teeth. Those overgrowths can be quite sharp and actually cut the insides of the cheeks and outside of the tongue. This is part of the reason your veterinarian should check your horse's teeth at least annually.



Besides monitoring for these overgrowths, your vet can also check for other abnormalities such as missing teeth, imbalances and soft tissue problems such as gingivitis due to rotting feed packed between teeth. A full dental exam should be performed prior to floating (rasping) the teeth. Sedation is encouraged for the exam to facilitate the safe and comfortable placement of a full mouth speculum which holds the mouth open for the veterinarian

to inspect each tooth both manually and with a pick and mirror. This way any minor problems can be noted and corrected before they become major issues requiring extensive and expensive treatment.

Check out this website for more information and pictures on some common dental abnormalities. <http://www.sunnysidevetclinic.com/articles/equine-advanced-dental.htm>

Vaccinations:

One seemingly easy way to save money on your horse's health care is to vaccinate them yourself; why pay the extra money for veterinary administration? Here are a few reasons to consider:

1. If your horse were to have untoward complications due to vaccination, (anaphylactic reaction, abscess formation, vaccine failure, etc.) the company producing the vaccine will help cover the costs for treatment, but only if the vaccine was administered by a veterinarian.
2. Your veterinarian can give assurance that vaccinations have been handled properly, thus decreasing the chance of reactions and increasing efficacy.



3. Your veterinarian includes a brief physical examination with their vaccinations, ensuring your horse is healthy enough to receive them.
4. Your veterinarian has knowledge of current regional diseases and makes vaccine recommendations based on this knowledge.
5. Creating a relationship with the vet prior to an emergency will benefit all parties as your veterinarian will know where your horse is located, making it easier to speed there on a dark and rainy night. Your veterinarian will also know what is normal for your horse and how best to work around them.
6. A veterinary visit gives you an opportunity to ask questions about your horse's health and care.
7. Medical records will be kept of which vaccinations your horse received and reminders sent so you don't have to remember when boosters are due.
8. Your veterinarian knows where to administer the vaccination and has experience working with uncooperative horses.

So, how can you still save money while having your veterinarian do the vaccinations?

1. Group up: If you are at a boarding barn try to pick one day for your veterinarian to vaccinate all of the horses. If your horses live at home, talk with your horse owning neighbors and see if they would want to split a farm call for spring vaccinations.
2. Make use of the farm call to have other veterinary work such as floating teeth, bloodwork or lameness exams completed at the same time

In Conclusion:



We hope you found this newsletter to be both interesting and informative. If there are any topics you would like to see covered in the future, would like to receive future newsletters by e-mail, or you have questions about anything you read here, let us know via e-mail at doc@flyinghorsevet.com or by calling 740-527-0789. Furthermore, if you have any questions about our services, we would love to hear from you. Thank you, and have fun riding.

Brandy Snedden, DVM, CVA