

## Equine Winter Care

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## Take care of the basics

- Quality feed and balanced diet
- Proper deworming
- Appropriate vaccinations

## Hay, Water and Salt



## Hay

- Quality is key
- Inspect carefully and be picky
- Hay is "*heat*"
- Fiber digestion leads to body heat
- Plan to increase during colder temps
- \*Free choice hay – in cold weather

## Feed

- 1000 lb horse needs to eat 1.5-2% of its body weight in food just to maintain weight
- Normal weather: 15-20 lbs per day
- Cold weather: 35-40 lbs per day\*

\* too much hay?, may need to add grain

\* no more than 5 lbs of grain per meal

## Feed

- Watch out for moldy hay
- Add weight before winter
- Special attention:
  - Pregnant mares
  - Older horses
  - Young horses
  - Non-dominant horses

## Water



## Water

- Monitor intake
  - 1000 lb horse consumes ~ 10 gallons/day
  - Know each horse's average
- Keep warm 45-65°
- Break ice
- Check frequently
- Double bucket!!

## Heated Water



## Salt



## Salt

- Always provide a salt block
- Rely on vitamins and minerals from the diet or supplements rather than a trace mineral block
- Key to encouraging drinking
  - Top dress with 1-2 tbsp white salt

## Deworming



## Active Ingredient

- **Ivermectin:** Equell, Zimectrin, Equimectrin
- **Fenbendazole:** Panacur, Safe Guard
- **Oxibendazole:** Anthelcide
- **Pyrantel Pamoate:** Strongid, Exodus, Tape Care Plus
- **Moxidectin:** Quest
- **Praziquantel:** Equimax, Quest Plus, Zimectrin Gold

## Dewormer – active ingredient?



## How much paste dewormer?

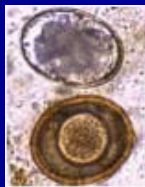
- Gold standard: measure horses weight
- Most dewormers we recommend the full tube for an average size adult horse
- Quest and Quest Plus: measure weight accurately

## Weight Tape



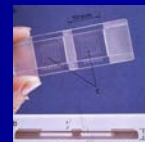
## Deworming – 3 options

1. **Strategic Worming Plan**
2. Interval - every 2 months rotation
3. Continuous - daily dewormer



## Strategic Deworming Plan

- Treat each horse as an **individual**
- Plan:
  1. Fecal egg count
  2. Classify horse as low, moderate or high shedder (# of eggs passed in manure)
  3. Deworm as recommended
  4. Recheck fecal yearly



## Strategic Deworming Plan

- Low shedder – every 6 months
- Moderate shedder – every 4 months
- High shedder – every 3 months

## Strategic Deworming Plan

- Fecal:
  - Fresh sample (refrigerate if >1 hour)
  - Only need one fecal ball
  - Zip lock bag with no air
  - \*\*We need to know when and what product was used for the last deworming

## Strategic Deworming Plan

- Advantages:
  - **Save money!!**
  - Reduce drug resistance
  - Give less chemicals to our horses

## Interval Deworming

- Rotate between different types of dewormers every 2 months
- Worm all horses the same
- Excessive deworming
- Resistance??

## Continuous Dewormer



## Daily Dewormer

- Pelleted dewormer (low dose) added to the feed every day
- Prevents new infections
- May not resolve existing infections

## Daily Dewormer

- Does not kill bots
- Paste deworm Spring and Fall for bots and tapeworms
- Resistance??

## Encysted Small Strongyles

- Treat at least once a year
- Only two choices:
  1. Quest (1 tube)
  2. Panacur PowerPac (5 tubes)

## Deworming Plan

- Bottom Line:
  - Deworming can be confusing
  - Do a fecal
  - Your veterinarian will help you
  - A proper plan is essential to your horses health

## Vaccines



## Core Vaccines

- 1. Tetanus Toxoid
- 2. \*Influenza
- 3. \*Rhinopneumonitis
- 4. West Nile
- 5. EEE/WEE

\* Recommended Fall/Winter vaccines

## Risk Based Vaccines

- Strangles (Intranasal)
- Potomac horse fever
- Rabies
- EPM
- EVA

## Shelter



## Shelter

- Shelter = warm horse = less \$ on feed
- Reduces heat loss by 20%
- Shelter:
  - Dry
  - Solid, even flooring
  - Good bedding
  - Well ventilated
  - Secure stalls
  - **\*\*Locked feed room**

## Look For Hazards



## Look For Hazards

- Stalls/Shelters:
  - Nails, bolts, splinters, sharp edges
  - Unsecured boards or bars
  - Reduce dust
  - Repair problems immediately!!

## Pastures

- Only two things belong in a horse pasture – horses and grass
- Look for hazards
- Remove hazards before they are covered in mud or snow
- **Halters OFF!!**
- Good footing
  - Reduce injuries due to falling

## CAUTION!!

- Be careful turning out horses that have been stalled for a few days during a storm
- Excitement and running lead to injury
- Exercise indoors first, if possible

## Winter Hoof Care



## Winter Hoof Care

- Proper DIET
- Regular farrier care is key!!
- Pick out feet DAILY
- Allow feet to dry each night in good bedding

## Winter Hoof Care

- Shoe or no shoe??
- If possible, don't stop exercising
- Hoof supplements: Biotin, Methionine

## Hoof Supplement



## Winter Foot Disease

- Sole Abscess
- Thrush
- White line disease
- Sole punctures

## Blanket



## Blanket or No Blanket??

- All horses should have a blanket
- BUT, know when to use it!!

## Blankets

- Horses rely on their hair coat to protect them and keep them warm
- Hair coat grows as day light decreases not as temperatures drop
- Blankets compress the winter coat
- Blanket hazards
  - Injury, skin disease, weight loss

## Blankets

- Cold temperatures minimally affect healthy horses
- Soaking rains and drafts make them sick
- Shelter first, blanket second
- Use blankets in extreme cold or prolonged dampness
- Horses that are older, thin or moving from warmer climates may need blankets

## If you use a blanket

- Needs to be WATERPROOF
- Change, wash and dry frequently
- Allow horse time without a blanket
- Keep clean
- Good fit!!!
- **\*\*check under blanket frequently!!**
- **\*\*touch don't just look – don't be fooled by a thick hair coat**

## Dentistry



## Dental Equipment





## Eating Efficiency



## Dentistry

- Advantages
  1. Eating efficiency – save \$\$\$
  2. Pain relief
  3. Longevity
  4. Biting performance

## Winter Health Problems

- Colic
- Respiratory Infections
- Foot Disease
- Pigeon Fever
- Arthritis
- Skin Disease

## Winter Health Problems

Colic – abdominal pain

- #1 Fall/Winter emergency
- Common signs: off feed, lying down, rolling, biting sides, breathing fast, sweating, decreased manure

## Winter Health Problems

Colic – abdominal pain

- Cold weather → cold water → decreased drinking → impaction colic
- Weather, stress & diet changes = colic

## Colic – how to prevent

- Monitor water consumption
- HEAT water >45 degrees
- Check water frequently (ice?)

## Colic – how to prevent

- Add salt to diet
- Feed a good quality grass hay
- Change feeds **SLOWLY**
  - Mix new hays
  - Change grain no faster than 1 lb every 3 days

## Colic – how to prevent

### Wheat Bran

- 3 quart scoop mixed with warm water
- 1-2 times weekly



## Colic – what to do?

- Call your vet **IMMEDIATELY!!**
- Walk the horse to prevent rolling
- Do not administer Banamine
- Do not allow eating

## Winter Health Problems

- Respiratory Infections
  - Winter colds – snotty nose, cough, fever
  - Flu and Rhino virus
    - Vaccinate!!
  - Allergic airway disease (COPD)
    - Poor ventilation during winter

## Respiratory Infections

- Schedule a vet exam (Don't Wait!!)
- Keep good barn conditions
- Avoid prolonged weather exposure
- Quarantine sick horses
- Quarantine new arrivals to the barn
  - How long? 2 weeks if possible

## Foot Disease

- Sole Abscess
  - Severe sudden 3-legged lameness
  - Swelling of the lower leg with hoof heat
  - Call for veterinary assistance
  - Treatment: open abscess and soak/wrap
- Thrush
  - Frog infection due to wet/poor environment
  - Treatment: trim frog and clean area, apply iodine, topical product, or bleach therapy

## Foot Problems

- Sole punctures:
  - Nail, wire, wood etc..
  - Do not remove object from foot if possible
  - Call immediately for veterinary help
  - Life threatening injury
  - Severe infection

## Winter Health Problems

### Pigeon Fever



## Pigeon Fever

- Bacterial infection leading to skin abscesses
- Swellings of the chest, cinch area and lower belly and groin
- Spread by biting insects
- Hot pack, drain abscesses and wound care

## Pigeon fever

- Average disease last 2 months
- Control with fly prevention
  - SWAT, fly spray, Solitude®, disinfection, manure control, fly predators

## Winter Health Problems

- Arthritis
  - Exercise, not stall confinement
  - Bute 1 – 2 grams daily
  - Weight control
  - Joint Supplements
    - High in MSM and Glucosamine
    - Ortho-chon – Platinum Performance

## Winter Health Problems

- Skin Disease
  - Scratches (Pastern Dermatitis)
    - Caused by exposure to mud and water
    - Treatment: keep dry and clean, clip hair, treat with dilute antiseptic
    - If not improving, call your vet
  - Rain Rot
    - Bacterial skin infection caused by excessive moisture exposure
    - Treatment: allow time to dry (keep inside), no blankets, sun exposure, antibacterial shampoo

## Summary

- Take time to look
- Prevent rather than treat
- Never hesitate to ask
- Horses are creatures of habit, make all changes SLOWLY

## Thank You

- Visit our website for further information and current updates on horse health
- [www.equusvet.com](http://www.equusvet.com)
- 503-632-2100
- Watch website for client info meetings

