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Calendars



It's nearly that time of year again. Only 51 days until Christmas! Please ensure that your home address is up-to-date with the office to receive this year's calendar.

Calendars will be mailed out early December.



How-To Videos and Articles



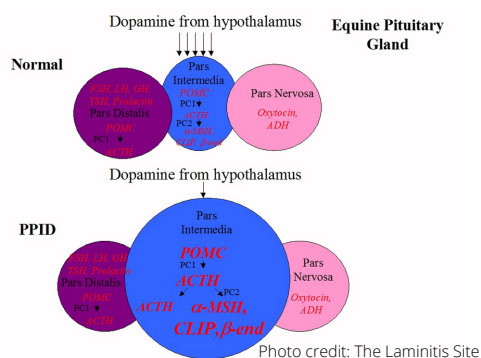
Did you know that our team has put together a library of helpful how-to videos and articles for our clients? On our website, you can find how-to videos and articles on a variety of topics, such as taking your horse's temperature, giving eye medication and more. Most recently, we have added videos on taking a digital pulse, giving oral medication and administering Dormosedan Gel. Let us know if there are additional topics on which you would like to see videos or articles.

Long Term Medications pt. 2 - Prascend

In our previous newsletter, we addressed the potential side effects of long term NSAID use for Osteoarthritis. In the second part of the series, we will discuss the effects of Prascend (pergolide) for the treatment of Pituitary Pars Intermedia Dysfunction (PPID).

PPID is becoming a very common disease found in our aging horse population. Luckily there is a medication, Prascend (pergolide) available to help control symptoms of the disease. Prascend works by mimicking the hormone Dopamine. Dopamine is involved in the neuro-signalling of the Pituitary Pars Intermedius (PPI). In horses with PPID, the release of Dopamine is reduced due to neural degeneration, causing the PPI to overproduce hormones, and enlarge. Prascend often greatly improves the quality and longevity of our horses' lives, reducing the risk of laminitis and other illnesses.

Prascend is considered largely to be a well tolerated medication. However, it is common to see a transient reduction in appetite when starting Prascend due to its Dopamine-like properties. In safety trials, when normal horses were given twice the normal maximum dose, <10% developed uncommon symptoms such as lameness, diarrhea and lethargy, while 33% showed decreased appetite. We sometimes see horses dislike the taste of Prascend, refusing to eat the meal or treat hiding the pill. Lastly, our greatest concern is the human-health risk. Direct contact with the medication should be avoided, particularly in pregnant, potentially pregnant and breastfeeding women.



Visit our website for more information on PPID.

The bigger challenge with the treatment of PPID with Prascend, is that the disease is progressive. As less Dopamine is available to control the enlarging overactive PPI, the Prascend dose needs to be adjusted to control symptoms. Owners will start to notice that the current dose of Prascend that previously kept their horse's coat short and prevented laminitis and other illnesses, no longer is as effective. We recommend repeating bloodwork annually or bi-annually to assess control of PPID.

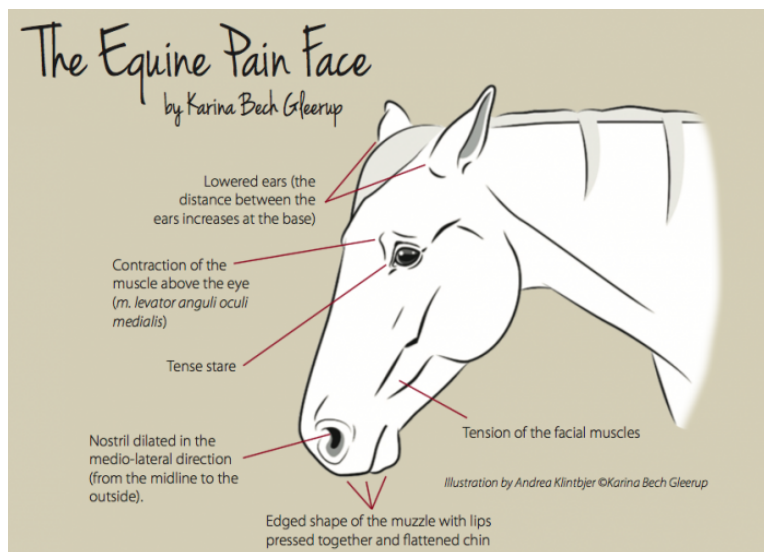
Pain vs. Behaviour

A 2014 study out of the UK examining over 500 sport horses in normal work and presumed sound, found 47% were actually overtly lame or had pain-related gait abnormalities. So this begs the question: Are we seeing 'naughty' horses or are we misinterpreting their attempts at communicating pain? Dr Danica recently attended a lecture by Dr Sue Dyson, a world-renowned expert on lameness diagnosis and management, on this topic. Dr Dyson presented the results of a five-part study examining the facial expressions and behaviours of horses with musculoskeletal pain. They developed a highly accurate and repeatable ethogram showing 24 facial or behavioural markers which reliably identified painful horses.

The study results showed that painful or overtly lame horses exhibited an average of 9 facial or behavioural markers with a maximum score of 14, while non-lame horses exhibited an average of 2 markers, with a maximum score of 6. Not all horses exhibited the same behaviours, and rider experience and tack fit may have changed the type of painful behaviours within individual horses but not their overall scores.

For lame horses, the following behaviours occurred significantly more: ear(s) back, mouth open, tongue exposed, change in eye posture or position (exposed sclera/ intense stare/ eye partially or fully closed/tense muscle behind the eye), going above the bit or behind the vertical, head tossing, head tilting, unwillingness to go forward, crookedness, hurrying, changing of gait spontaneously, poor quality canter, resisting, stumbling, and toe dragging.

In summary, Dr Dyson says she uses the ethogram as part of her lameness examinations. She believes that a horse exhibiting ≥ 8 behavioural markers, is likely to have musculoskeletal pain, while a horse only exhibiting one behaviour, may just lack training. If you are interested in learning more about the ethogram, there is an online course at www.equitopiacycenter.com



Recently, we said goodbye to one of our full-time vet assistants, Loranda. Loranda was accepted into the Olds College Farrier Science Program which will allow her to pursue her passion of becoming a farrier. The SEVS team wishes Loranda all the best in her studies!



Photo credit: Maureen Garrity Photography



With Loranda's departure, we have added two new part-time veterinary assistants to our team: Lena (left) and Gloria (right). Both Lena and Gloria have been working with horses for many years (through owning, competing, training, and more), making them a great fit for our team.



Outside of work, Lena can be found working towards her degree in Accounting through Camosun College. In Gloria's spare time, she can be found training to become a volunteer firefighter. The SEVS team is excited to welcome our two newest members!



Holiday Hours!



We will have modified hours between December 24th, 2019 through January 2nd, 2020. Please make sure all prescriptions are called in and picked up within our modified schedule. Please see the below schedule:

December 24th 2019: Office and Vet Hours 9am – 2pm

December 25th & 26th 2019: CLOSED

December 27th 2019: Office and Vet Hours 9am – 2pm

December 28th & 29th 2019: CLOSED

December 30th & 31st 2019: Office and Vet Hours 9am- 2pm

January 1st, 2020: CLOSED

January 2nd, 2020: Regular Business Hours Resume

We will be **available** for **URGENT** and **EMERGENCY** calls throughout the holiday season. Happy Holidays!