

The Barn Veterinary Practice Equine Newsletter



The Barn

After a very busy summer for everyone at The Barn there is a lot to catch up on.

The equine team is in full force now with Mark, Lizzie, Julia and Grayling, all looking forward to expanding the equine side of The Barn, with the promise of new equipment on the horizon.

The team had another great year at the Tendring Show. A successful and quiet (a word only allowed to be used when referring to the past and never the present!) day despite the hard ground.

Charley, our student nurse, is leaving us for her final year of training and as much as we want her back when she finishes, Australia is calling. To say we will miss her is an understatement, but we wish her all the best!

Recent and Reminders

- The hot weather has brought out the flies with a vengeance and so we have seen a lot of conjunctivitis recently. Whilst fly masks can help prevent problems caused by the flies there are also potential problems. Horses can “helpfully” decide to rub them and we have had a few cases of eye ulcers due to fly masks, so you should monitor your horses and get in touch with us if your horse seems in any discomfort or there seem to be any eye problems.
- Autumn is a good time to start thinking about worming regimes for your horses. Feel free to drop faecal samples into the surgery for worm egg counts. More information on the importance of worming for encysted red worms in the Winter newsletter.



Don't forget to follow us on Facebook @barnvets for both equine and small animal news, photos and competitions!

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Hot Topic - Laminitis

Laminitis is a common condition, especially in ponies, that can cause considerable, and serious, health problems, that can, unfortunately, lead to euthanasia. Usually affecting the front feet, laminitis is inflammation of the laminae in the foot, that hold the hoof wall to the pedal bone. Once laminae become inflamed the pull of the deep digital flexor tendon is no longer resisted normally and the pedal bone can rotate.

Causes of laminitis include carbohydrate overload, excess weight bearing (for example when lame in another limb), Cushing's disease, septicaemia, and on very rare occasions corticosteroid administration.

Clinical signs of laminitis depend on whether it is acute or chronic. Acute laminitis presents as an odd stance in which forelimbs are stretched out in front, depression, inappetence, heat in feet and increased digital pulses, whilst chronic laminitis involves intermittent lameness episodes with flat or convex soles, prominent hoof wall rings and narrowing of the dorsal hoof wall.

There are very few proven treatments for laminitis and even those tend to contradict each other, making our jobs very difficult and often limiting us to pain relief in the form of equipalazone ("bute"). Hay only should be fed, ideally soaked, and feet should be supported using Styrofoam pads and/or deep bedding and in chronic cases corrective farriery may be helpful.

If you are concerned about laminitis please let us know as soon as you can.