



News



Fall 2010



From the desk of
Dr. Peroni

Dear CBE Friends,

We hope our fall newsletter finds you well. It seems as if we were just complaining about the heat of our summer and now the holidays are just around the corner! I hope all of you are continuing to enjoy your horses and have taken advantage of some of the beautiful days we have had to ride.

Please continue to refer to our website at www.coveredbridgeequine.com for client information, a suggested deworming program, and also information on how to download your digital Coggins off the internet. Please feel free to call us if you have any questions or concerns.

What's new at CBE?

Dr. Stone gave birth to a healthy little girl, "Sophie Rae" on Monday, November 22 at 3:15 pm. She was 7.00 lbs and 21 inches long! Mother, father, and daughter are all doing well. Congratulations Dr. Stone! She will be on maternity leave for several months and if Sophie eventually lets her parents sleep, Dr. Stone will be back working at CBE in the beginning of February.

Dr. Peroni completed all of the requirements in the equine acupuncture program at the Chi Institute in Reddick, FL and received her CVA status (Certified Veterinary Acupuncturist) in November 2010. Dr. Holmes also passed the written and practical examinations at the Chi Institute and is working diligently on the other requirements for the program to receive her CVA status. We are very excited to

In this issue:

Introduction
New Medication Information
Feeding Weanlings
Tips on Saddle Fit
Fact or Fiction on Dentistry
Artificial Lighting

offer these alternative therapies to our equine patients.

Chris Pritchard, CBE's technician, is now considered a USDF (United States Dressage Federation) "L" Graduate with distinction. Chris was one of only two graduates in the Southeast region to be honored with distinction in the final testing. By graduating with distinction, she is now a candidate for the "r" judging license through United States Equestrian Federation. Congratulations Chris!

Marie Greer, CBE's office manager, and her QH Colonels Missin Gun "Cash," represented their National Reining Horse Association affiliate at the S.E. Affiliate Finals in Williamston, S.C in October 2010. This was the result of a successful show year for them. Way to go Marie!

Sable Allen, our part time technician, is working very hard in her first year of veterinary school at the University of Georgia. She doesn't have a lot of time to work during the school semester, but will be filling in during school breaks and summer vacation.



MEDICATION INFORMATION

We've added a new page to our website. If you visit the Client Information page and click on the [Information on Medications](#) link, you will find a page with information on new select equine medications. We will be adding more medications to this page so be sure to check back often.

Feeding Weanlings



By Dr. Stone

It is often difficult for horse owners to make feeding decisions for weanlings due to the variety of options available. Some individuals believe that feeding large amounts of grain will simply result in growth of a larger horse; this line of thought does not account for the potential growth-related problems that can arise. Weanlings need to be fed a well-balanced diet consisting of both grain and good quality hay. As a weanling ages, their rate of growth and weight gain decrease by one fourth from 6 months of age to 1 year of age. It is therefore imperative to constantly monitor your weanling's diet.

As a horse owner, it is best to buy a reputable brand of feed that is formulated for a growing foal and follow the feeding recommendations written on the bag. Feed companies employ veterinarians specialized in nutrition to optimize growth and prevent any orthopedic problems. In addition, feeding a high quality forage is very important in horses, and one should **never** choose to feed less hay or a poor quality hay. Alfalfa can be included in a diet in limited amounts, but care needs to be taken because of its high levels of protein, energy, and calcium.

The most common mistake made is feeding too much of a high protein feed. This can contribute to

multiple developmental diseases such as osteochondrosis, epiphysitis and contracted tendons.

Typical signs of either osteochondrosis or epiphysitis are enlarged, warm joints and often lameness. Weanlings with contracted tendons have a very upright appearance below the knee and are found to be very uncomfortable, i.e. lying down more than usual and often appear to be walking on "stilts." To prevent progression of such issues, it is best to consult your veterinarian to institute a treatment plan and adjust their diet as needed.

The last thing you want to do with a weanling is to stimulate overgrowth. Growth rate is greatly influenced by both the quality and quantity of feed, exercise and genetics. Since multiple variables are responsible for orthopedic problems, it makes the most sense to be conservative with any feeding program. It is important to monitor your weanling's growth with a weight tape monthly, and adjust your feeding program based on the manufacturer's recommendations.





Tips On Saddle Fit

1. When you first purchase a saddle, look for symmetry in the saddle panels and gullet. Also check this after some use. Many new saddles have serious defects, such as twisted trees or panels that are installed asymmetrically.
2. The center of the seat should fit nicely over the lowest point of your horse's back, so that the seat of the saddle is a mirror image of the horse's back. If the center of the saddle does not line up with the horse's center, the rider will be out of balance and the horse may become back sore.
3. The position of the saddle on the back is the most critical aspect of saddle fit. The most common mistake is to place the saddle too far forward, which places the rigid tree over the top of the shoulders. This can significantly restrict the movement of the front

legs; if the saddle is moved back to the correct position, the horse's stride is often lengthened immediately.

4. The seat of the saddle should stay level while you are riding, i.e. the saddle should not slope toward the cantle or down toward the pommel either. The saddle should be secure and stay in place at all times.
5. Pressure points on the underside of the saddle can be detected by looking for irregularly worn areas of your saddle or irregular dirty/clean spots on the saddle pad. These pressure points can cause pain in your horse's back. The bars and panels should contact the horse's back, without any bridging present in the center of the saddle. You should note if the horse raises or hollows its back when being ridden. He may also bite at his sides, pin his ears, or become agitated when tightening the girth if he has pressure points over his back.
6. Make sure the support panels are wide enough. The gullet should be wide and high enough to clear the spine of the horse completely (approximately four fingers' width).
7. When the girth is on and is tightened, the saddle should slope straight down to the point of the elbow or up to six inches behind the elbow. The girth should be placed over the narrowest part of the chest.
8. The tree of the saddle should fit without the use of pads as it crosses the withers. If the tree is too narrow, pressure points or sores will develop on the withers, and the pommel will sit too high, which will unbalance the rider. If pads are placed under the back of the saddle to raise it, even more pressure will be placed on the withers which will further compound the problem. If the tree is too wide across the withers, the rider will be tipped forward, and the saddle may actually press directly on the withers, resulting in a very uncomfortable saddle fit.

Fact versus Fiction on Equine Dentistry

By Dr. Elizabeth N. Holmes

Equine dentistry can be very confusing. Allow me to answer some commonly asked questions on important topics. If you have any other questions, please let us know!

Q. Do horses' teeth continuously grow throughout life?

A. Horses' teeth continuously erupt throughout their adult life. Tooth growth means that the tooth is lengthened by the deposition of new cellular components, dentin and cement. Tooth eruption is simply the protrusion of the tooth out of the alveolar bone. By the time a horse is about five years old, all permanent teeth have begun to erupt and are at maximum size. At this time, the majority of each tooth remains hidden in the sinuses and alveolar bone. Every year an adult horse's cheek teeth erupt an additional 2.5mm, and are simultaneously worn down a similar amount. This wear occurs as a result of natural grinding of food. A horse's incisors continually erupt at the same rate, but are not worn down as readily. Thus came to be the phrase describing older horses, "Long in the tooth!"

In the state of Georgia, anyone performing equine dentistry who is not a veterinarian is practicing veterinary medicine without a license.

Q. Should I have an equine 'dentist' do my horse's teeth, or should I use an equine veterinarian?

A. In the state of Georgia, only your equine veterinarian is licensed to do an oral examination, occlusal equilibration (aka floating), or any other dental procedures. This is for your horse's protection. Teeth are living structures that require appropriate medical care and veterinarians are the only individuals qualified to do that. In the state of Georgia, anyone performing equine dentistry who is not a veterinarian is practicing veterinary medicine without a license.

Q. What is an 'equine or lay dentist'?

A. These terms are very ambiguous and can be used to describe 'dentists' of all types and backgrounds. Some 'dentists' have little or no professional training. Others have been to one of various dentistry schools around the country. Schools such as these give you the education to become a veterinary technician and assist a licensed veterinarian, but not to perform dental procedures without supervision. In some states, such as South Carolina, veterinary technicians are allowed to float teeth, but oral examinations, extractions, administering intravenous sedation, and other procedures are still considered the practice of veterinary medicine.

Q. Is sedation required for all dentals?

A. Absolutely! Sedation is necessary for the safety of the horse, horse handler, and veterinarian. Without it, an oral examination is dangerous and incomplete. Before the use of sedation, veterinarians relied on sound and feel to evaluate sharpness and alignment. Now that we are blessed to have better tools and drugs, veterinarians can visualize each and every tooth and diagnose sharp enamel points, malocclusions, fractured teeth, infected teeth and many other problems accurately.





Many of you have asked about Dr. Kim Keeton, who has been working and competing her horses in the UK since February 2010. She had a great summer there but unfortunately was injured while working on a young filly last month. She had a traumatic knee injury and returned to the Athens area and had an ACL reconstructive surgery done. She will remain in the United States throughout her recovery, but will head back to the UK to finish out her contract.

Tate will enjoy an extended holiday and Bear is at West Kington Stud being collected and frozen through the first of December, and thereafter, he will go back into full training. We wish Dr. Keeton a quick recovery and the best of luck over the next few months!

Artificial Lighting To Increase Mare's Cyclic Activity

Do you plan to breed your mare this spring? If so, you may want to start thinking about timing and when you would like to have a foal for next year. As many of you know, most mares do not begin cycling regularly until April or May. This may work out great for those lucky owners who are able to get their mare pregnant on the first try, but sometimes it takes several breeding attempts to get her pregnant, which could easily run into early or mid-summer. In order for your mare to be actively cycling so a February or March breeding can happen, you need to start her on an artificial lighting schedule. This should be started in early December and involves exposure to a 200 watt bulb (12 x 12 stall) for 16 hours every day until breeding time. Timers can be used to allow mares to take advantage of natural light during the day, but then they must be brought in on time and put under lights before it gets dark. Please call if you have any questions about artificial lighting and your brood mare.

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