



Covered Bridge Equine

SPRING 2019 NEWSLETTER

From the desk of Dr. Peroni

I was sitting at one of our daughter's basketball games this winter with a friend of mine (a non-horse person). She said to me "I heard horse people are a little crazy. Is that true?" The way she said it made me laugh. Then I started to think about it. This is not the first time I have been asked the question. Are we crazy? All of us at CBE own our own horses, ride and take care of them. So we are horse people as well. Why does the rest of the population think we are a little crazy?

So after pondering this question, I had some proof that the non-horse community may indeed be correct. For example, we spend a lot of money on our horse's shoes once a month. But we duct tape our boots together to keep them from falling apart because we don't want to buy ourselves new shoes. We pay for chiropractic, acupuncture, massage, and saddle fitting when we rarely pamper ourselves. We wait to go to the doctor with our colds and aches and pains but we immediately make an appointment for our horse if they aren't feeling like themselves. We worry if our horse is too hot or too cold and worry that they may be wearing the wrong blanket. Is their blanket still waterproof? When have we ever worried if our raincoats were still waterproof? We fret when we get low on hay or grain, but we don't worry when we run out of food for ourselves. We show up to work or a dinner party with hay in our hair. We also don't think this is a big deal!

When I drive down the road I think about my horse. Is this normal? I think about riding and which one of my fellow horse friends I want to ride with next. Where should we go? Is it going to rain? I also frequently have conversations with my horse. I ask him questions and I even answer back (with a response that I think he would actually say to me). OK, so this is a little weird. In addition, I was recently watching a soccer game that my son was playing at the high school soccer field. The new turf field is very impressive and it's used for football, soccer and lacrosse. I was admiring all of the pretty lines and how huge it was and thinking to myself, "Wow, I would love to gallop across that soccer field." Only a fellow horse person could understand this.

When we talk about planning a family vacation to the beach, I wonder if it's the time of year that I could bring my horse. Wouldn't that be fun? I was even talking to my husband the other day because our 20 year wedding anniversary is in the fall. We were discussing where we wanted to go or what we wanted to do to celebrate our anniversary. And I was thinking "perhaps I can bring my horse?" I kept this to myself 😊.

In summary, we are all very passionate about our horses. Spending time with them, caring for them, riding, training, and competing horses can become very addictive. Maybe it's even an obsession. My guess is that all of you can understand this, because you are a horse person as well. So, the answer is "Yes, we are a little crazy. That's why we need to stick together 😊😊".

Cushings Disease and Equine Metabolic Syndrome

From the desk of Dr. Katy Mayhew

Equine pars pituitary intermedia dysfunction (commonly known as Cushings Disease) affects many horses in our practice. This disease is caused by a small tumor on the pituitary gland that causes over production of the hormones ACTH and cortisol. Cortisol is a steroid and can increase horse's risk of laminitis, infections, illness and hoof abscesses. Another common finding is these horses won't shed their winter coats in the summer!



Classic presentation for advanced PPID in a pony (Above). PPID can mimic equine metabolic syndrome as well! Cresty necks and fat pads cans show up in early cushings disease (Below).



EARLY SIGNS OF CUSHINGS

- Decreased energy
- Long hairs in strange places, decreased shedding in the spring
- Loss of topline muscling
- Abnormal sweating (too much or too little)
- Regional fat pads
- Recurrent hoof abscesses or laminitis

ADVANCED SIGNS OF CUSHINGS

- Dull and lethargic
- Loss of hair shedding, long shaggy coat.
- Muscle atrophy
- Rounded abdomen (hay belly)
- Increased drinking and urination
- Excessive mammary gland secretions
- Blindness
- High fecal egg counts
- Laminitis!!

Confirming a horse has PPID, especially in the early stages, requires a blood test. This test examines ACTH and insulin levels in the blood and requires the horse not receive any grain or treats for 4 hours before the test (hay and grass is okay though). The blood is then processed and frozen and shipped to Cornell University in New York for testing.

Because horses have cyclical ACTH increases during the fall of the year it is important to test for PPID during spring to provide the most accurate results for diagnosis and monitoring of this disease. Once a horse has developed PPID they will always have it and it must be managed for the rest of their lives.

Thankfully there is a treatment for this disease that can help decrease the signs and improve the horse's quality of life and performance! **Prascend (pergolide) is the only product FDA approved to treat PPID and is only available with a prescription.** Additionally these horses often benefit from a low starch diet and may require more frequent deworming or vaccinations due to their decreased immunity.

Many horses go on to live long, healthy, active lives with proper treatment and management of PPID! If you have any questions about testing or management please call the office to talk to one of our veterinarians!

Road Trip Check List

From the desk of Dr. Paige Williams

So, you've picked out your destination. You've made a plan for your trip, whether it is to a show in Florida or to the beach to re-enact your favorite scene from the Black Stallion while hoping that your horse doesn't think the waves are horse eating monsters. You've probably cleaned your saddles, packed all of your feed, fretted about who is going to take care of your other furry critters left at home, and left individually packed bags labeled for your husband to eat. Realistically, the organized bags are for the remaining horses at home and the take out menu was left on the fridge for the husband :) That's definitely what happened to my dad when my mom and I used to leave to go to shows. I do remember, however, that my horse's paperwork was not the first thing I thought about packing. One emergency Coggins and health certificate later, I put it higher on my checklist, especially after my mom suggested I pay for them.

The Coggins test is a document that certifies that the horse does not have Equine Infectious Anemia (EIA). EIA is an untreatable, potentially fatal viral disease that is transmitted from horse to horse via horseflies (the giant, tiny dog carrying ones, not the small stable flies). Even if your horse never leaves the property, it still needs to be tested for EIA. If the untested horse happens to become infected, neighboring horses can also become infected, leave the property and become a potential source of infection for others. There have been positive cases found this year in Georgia. The test is good for one year, then has to be redone. Always check the **"date reported out"** prior to going to show, they tend to expire the day you have to leave!!

Whenever you travel out of state, regardless of where you go, you need a health certificate. These are travel documents regulated by the USDA that helps track down an animal's recent trips in the event of an outbreak. They certify that the horse was seen by a veterinarian at least 10 days prior to travelling and it was healthy. **If the horse goes across state lines, it needs a health certificate.** If you go to Florida without one, and miss that Department of Agriculture stop, they will chase you down! There is a pretty hefty fine if you get caught without one. Currently, all 30 day health certificates are digital, so they can be easily kept on your phone or resent if necessary. The horse's Coggins has to be in date for the full length of the health certificate. I highly recommend if you plan to show or travel several times this year, to get a 6 month health certificate. These are not digital, but are \$50 and allow you to travel to multiple destinations on a single certificate, your Coggins has to be in date for the full six months it is issued. They are recognized in Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Virginia and West Virginia.

Happy trails! Here is a small list of some of the things I recommend you keep in your trailer :)

Horse Travel Checklist:

- Coggins (In Date!)
- Health Certificate (if necessary)-use 6 month to save \$ if going in the recognized SE states
- Hay/Grain with buckets, bucket hooks/straps, feeders +/- hay nets
- Tack plus spares *bring extra girth, leather, reins, bell boots, etc. Anything that can break will at the worst time!
- Halters/lead ropes + few spares just in case
- First Aid kit- Bute, banamine, betadine solution, hoof abscess supplies, SSD ointment, CBE's ER number
- Grooming supplies, fly spray, shoe pullers
- Spare tire (make sure it's been recently inspected), Trailer Aid, and tire iron
- WD-40, duct tape, wire cutters, hammer, flash light, jumper cables, baling twine <--#essentials

Spring Vaccines and Deworming

Check your records or call our office to see when your horse is due for his spring vaccines and fecal egg count! With our long mosquito season in Georgia it is important to make sure your horse is protected from the diseases those small bugs spread! Call our office to talk to a veterinarian about designing a custom vaccine and deworming protocol for your horse!

Every 6 months:

Eastern and Western Encephalomyelitis, Tetanus, West Nile Virus, (Risk Based: Influenza, Equine Herpes Virus, and Strangles). Fecal Egg Counts.

Once a Year:

Rabies! (Strangles for some horses)

**Did you know that our vaccine supplier (Zoetis) will help pay for treatment if your horse becomes ill with one of the above diseases after being properly vaccinated with their product by a veterinarian?*

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Zylkene

This is a new medication that helps with anxiety and other stress-related behavioral problems in horses! It's a powder that comes in a packet for once a day administration and is given to horses on top of their feed. It has a relaxing/calming effect on the horse without causing drowsiness. This medication is ideal for helping horses maintain a normal disposition during periods of environmental or situational stress. It contains alpha-casozepine which is a **milk protein**. It was discovered because scientists speculated that a substance in mother's milk might cause a sense of relaxation. The active ingredient is not listed as a prohibited substance by any US equine regulatory organization. Owners should always follow the recommendations made for their competition and correct withdrawal periods. Zylkene can be given once a day as maintenance or daily for several days before a competition. Please let us know if you have questions about Zylkene or would like to try it for your horse.