



Covered Bridge Equine

SPRING 2020 NEWSLETTER

From the desk of Dr. Peroni

As an ambulatory veterinarian I have come to realize that my job gives me ample opportunity to think.... I mean drive.... I mean that I think while I drive. Because yes, we drive all day long and sometimes there are long commutes between farms. So one day when I was driving down the road, I was reflecting about all of the things in life that make me happy. So I thought I would share them with you. Maybe you can relate 😊

It Makes Me Happy When...

1. My horse loads on the trailer on the first try
2. When I need to wear sunglasses
3. When I have 3 rain jackets in my backseat and I don't need any of them (because it's not raining)
4. When I schedule an appointment with my farrier and it doesn't rain (because I don't have a barn)
5. When I drive to a new client's house and they have easy- to- read numbers on their mailbox
6. When my horse falls asleep when I groom him
7. When I make a date with friends to go trail riding. And it doesn't rain.
8. When someone needs a 30 day health certificate and they have the address where they are going and they give us at least 48 hours to do it. This is very much appreciated.
9. When I get called to go see a horse who is colicking and they feel better as soon as I pull in. Sometimes just knowing the doctor is coming makes them feel better.
10. When my children say please and thank you.
11. When my three dogs greet me when I pull in at home.
12. When I am out on calls and by the time I get home it's cold and dark and my husband has cooked a delicious hot dinner.
13. When there is a bathroom available at a barn. A microwave is a really special treat!
14. When someone opens the gate for me when I pull into their farm. This is really spectacular.
15. When the horse I am going to see at a farm is caught, ready and clean for me!
16. When I get to ride my horse!!!

Well Foal Exams

From the desk of Dr. Katy Mayhew

There is nothing more wonderful than seeing new foals playing and getting into trouble in a pasture in the spring. Did you know one of the most important things you can do for your brand new foal is schedule a Well Foal Exam in the first 24 hours of his life?

Foals are born into the world without much in the way of a good immune system and depend on their mother's colostrum (first milk) to provide antibodies to help them fight off infection until their own bodies are ready to protect them. Additionally, they need lots and lots of glucose from milk to stay warm and to make sure they transition successfully to life outside the uterus. It's important to make sure they have absorbed enough antibodies and that they learn how to nurse appropriately. Your veterinarian will check the foal's suckle reflex and also ensure he doesn't have a cleft palate. A small amount of blood will be drawn for a snap test to evaluate the effectiveness of the colostrum to protect the foal from illness. Healthy foals should have an IgG (antibody concentration) of >800mg/dL. If it is less than the 800 cut off, your veterinarian may need to tube the foal with more colostrum or give an intravenous plasma transfusion and start antibiotics

Many of the same things we think about with human infants are concerns with foals too. Foals have belly buttons and if they do not close appropriately, they can be prone to hernias or infections in this region. Your veterinarian will evaluate the foal's umbilicus (belly button) and probably want to see the foal urinate to make sure no urine is coming from this structure. Sometimes an ultrasound of this area may be necessary as well.

Occasionally foals are born with heart murmurs that go away within a couple of days. These can be normal, but other times murmurs may suggest a defect within the heart. It is important for your veterinarian to be able to listen to your foal and determine if everything sounds normal. Foals are also prone to rib fractures while playing or even during birth. Your veterinarian will palpate all of his tiny ribs to make sure nothing seems out of place.

Checking your foal's legs for straightness or in some cases complete development of his bones is also important for his athletic life later on. Correction of some angular limb deformities needs to be instituted soon after birth to ensure the foal develops strong and healthy legs.

Do not forget your mare just brought a little horse into the world! Your veterinarian will examine her to make sure there was not any tearing or injury to her birth canal and that she is producing enough milk and her mammary gland is healthy. Foals are so exciting and so rewarding to watch grow up! We are excited to be a part of your foal's first day in this world!

FOAL KIT CHECK LIST

- Soft clean straw for the stall
- Tail wrap for mare
- Ivory soap
- Bucket with warm water
- Clean, sharp scissors
- Latex or nitrile gloves
- Bath towels (2-3)
- Naval dip (dilute chlorhexidine solution)
- Brown gauze or baling twine
- Thermometer
- Large trash bags
- Halter and lead rope for mare
- Phone number for your veterinarian!
- Camera to take pictures of your new baby!

Printable checklist available at coveredbridgeequine.com



Rain Woes

From the desk of Dr. Paige Williams (Soon to be Dr. Hix☺)

How is everyone doing? Are you as tired of the 20 inches of rain in the last two and a half months as I am? I haven't gotten my truck stuck yet and I swiped Jeffrey's Muck boots, so there is cause for small victories! I'm so happy to be finished with dental discount extravaganza months with the added bonus of fear of being electrocuted due to all the rain. Thank you to all the beautiful souls that rescheduled due to daily tsunamis. Ok, I promise I'll tell you all something informative in this article, otherwise the other two won't let me write anymore...

What are the major issues we've been seeing with all this rain? Horses, despite Disney's promotions of Elsa's water horse, were not designed to live in water. These natively dry land creatures are having to deal with being soaked on a daily basis and their caretakers are battling the repercussions of the elements. Thankfully, these issues tend to be minor, and although tedious and annoying, are relatively simple to treat.

We'll start with skin issues. Rain rot and scratches are two of the most common issues we see when horses are constantly exposed to torrential downpours. If you haven't experienced either issue before, please send me your secrets and skip to the part about hoof abscesses later in this article. These are skin infections on the horse. Rain rot primarily affects the horse's topline, but can involve the horse's entire coat. Scratches are areas of dermatitis and "crusting" along the back of a horse's pasterns. They are typically caused by a secondary bacterial infection after prolonged contact with damp, humid environment. The exposure to water or mud causes the skin to weaken and its natural ability to heal itself is decreased and bacteria set up shop and cause big, crusty scab lesions. Both can cause areas of significant hair loss from the scabs being removed. These are ridiculously annoying and problematic, especially if you are getting ready for show seasons!

Hoof abscesses. There's nothing scarier than coming out to see your horse that was completely sound yesterday hobble in to the barn three-legged lame in the morning looking completely miserable. Hoof abscesses are basically a large pimple in between the laminae of the horse's foot. The buildup of pressure is very painful and the horse will refuse to put weight on that foot. Typically, the ground being wet softens the foot, which expands slightly, then the ground dries out and bacteria enter the foot via tiny cracks as the hoof shrinks. If your vet can localize the lameness to the foot, typically they will try to open the area for drainage and apply a poultice to help remove the infection. NSAID's are key to help reduce pain. Abscesses tend to resolve in about a week.



Skin Tips and Tricks

-Keep the horse in as dry an area as possible. Try to keep out of the mud and allow them time to stand in a dry area, potentially in some shavings or sand.

*-DON'T over wash! Give them a good scrub once a week with an antimicrobial shampoo like Miconahex or Maleseb. Use a currycomb and get all those scabs out of there. Be careful though, sometimes taking the scabs off is painful**

-Use a product like Betagen spray daily on areas of rain rot and ointment with a steroid and an antibiotic on the scratches.



Hoof Tips and Tricks

-Try keeping your horse in a dry area and pick out their feet daily. Even if they can eat their grain/hay in a sandy area or a dry stall with shavings, that helps prevent abscesses. This also helps with thrush and white line disease.

-Horses are prone to hoof abscesses. It's going to happen, just be prepared if it does!

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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Covered Bridge Equine News and Events!

- Dr. Williams is getting married in April!!
- Our technician Alexa is getting married in May!!
- Dr. Peroni's daughter Julia is graduating high school this spring and headed to Shorter University to play basketball! Congratulations Julia!
- Alyssa, our assistant, will be moving to Augusta at the end of April, her last day is May 1st ☹️ She is pursuing a Masters of Public Health!
- Madelyn will be coming back to work at CBE in the office! Please give her a warm welcome back, we have missed her!!