



**UPDATES IN BRIEF**

- Focus on Equine Oral Health
- Cliffe Equine is now an RCVS Tier 2 accredited practice and a BEVA registered clinic for AI
- Two new dates for your diary
- Cliffe Equine News
- Donkey Care Updates
- Microchipping: new regulations

**DONKEY VITAL STATISTICS**

Temperature 36.2-37.8°C  
Av: 37.1°C

Pulse rate 36-68  
Av: 44/min

Respiratory rate 12-31/min

Feed test:  
Failure to take ginger biscuit: no appetite

Average Weight 160-220kg

Miniature: 100-120kg  
11hh Standard: 150-180kg  
Poitou: 350-40kg  
Mammoth Ass: 300-400kg



[www.cliffequine.co.uk](http://www.cliffequine.co.uk)

(01323) 815120—24hr veterinary care

## Focus on Gum Disease & Fillings...

Horse's cheek teeth are tightly packed together creating a single grinding surface. Roots are angled to ensure this close association remains as teeth erupt. If food material packs into gaps (*diastema*) between the teeth gum (*periodontal*) disease will quickly follow. Periodontal disease associated with diastema is the most painful equine dental disease & the most common cause of severe quidding. Affected horses may lose weight & develop 'hamster pouches' as they entrap food between the teeth. They are prone to impacted colic & choke due to failure to chew long fibre adequately.

There are many reasons diastema develop, including poor root angulation, over-crowding (common in miniature breeds) & displaced cheek teeth. Untreated periodontal disease can lead to infection of the tooth roots &/or underlying bone & sinuses.

As affected areas are extremely inflamed examination is painful. Treatment requires heavy sedation with nerve blocks, as even

As you may remember from our last newsletter Cliffe Equine Clinic have become members of the XLVets group. Most recently we were partaking in a charity relay bike ride which linked a route from John O'Groats to Lands End to get two lost calves to Stoneleigh, Warwickshire. This event was to raise money for two farming charities. Thanks to your generous support we raised over £400, contributing to a grand total of over £10,000 raised nationwide! A valiant effort was made by all the

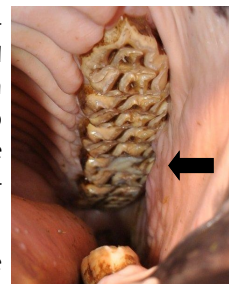
sedated horses object. X-rays help assess likely diastema improvement with time & future tooth eruption.

Widening diastema allow food material to move freely, reducing gum pain; while periodontal disease is treated by flushing to ensure the gum is clear of all contamination. The defect is filled with antibiotic gel & capped with impression material to clear up infection. Treatment must *only* be performed by a veterinary surgeon.

Horses with diastema require careful dietary management. Grass replacements, e.g. grass or fibre nuts & Readigrass, are very useful providing chopped fibre as a replacement for the hay ration.

Dental caries (dental decay) does occur in the horse & can lead to infections of the pulp & tooth roots. Defects in cement that fill the central cups of enamel (infudibulae) become packed with feed particles & bacteria

leading to dental caries & enamel destruction. The tooth weakens & it may fracture. Fractured teeth are painful & require extraction at substantial cost. Fractured teeth are difficult to remove often requiring complicated surgery.



We now can perform fillings on these areas. Thorough assessment ensures there is no evidence of

pulp or root infection; this often requires radiographs of the tooth roots. Caries are drilled out & flushed under high pressure and the defect filled with composite or amalgam, the same process as fillings in human dentistry. This process halts the decay process giving excellent strength to the tooth, preventing costly & painful tooth fracture & infection.

## Cliffe Equine Clinic News

cyclists & you can see the photos of some familiar faces in action at [www.cliffequine.co.uk](http://www.cliffequine.co.uk)!

In the staff news we have two new faces in the Cliffe Equine team. Heather Rea will be joining us this year as a vet out and about. She is from the local area originally, so many of you may recognize her already, and joins us from practice in Devon, so it's more of a welcome home for Heather.

As we have become increasingly busy in the hospital particularly

over the last few years, we have decided to expand on the veterinary side. Rebecca Goodwin joins us as our intern. She will be mainly clinic based and her main role is to take care of the hospitalized patients during their stay, but you may see her out and about with Penny at dental visits too.

Finally, as Christmas approaches we congratulate Imogen & Gareth on their wedding on Christmas Eve.

**Happy Christmas and New Year to you all!**



# CLIFFE EQUINE



## CARING FOR YOUR DONKEY

Donkeys & mules are becoming increasingly popular in the UK, both as pets as well as to ride & drive. Sadly, all too often these animals are well meaningly rescued by people with no previous experience. While owning or caring for a donkey can be very rewarding, it is vital that we are aware they are not "little ponies" & problems will arise if we treat them as such.

Donkeys have very different physical & emotional characteristics. They are very stoic, rarely showing signs of disease or pain until things are very serious. They develop strong emotional bonds with other animals, so are best kept in pairs rather than alone with a horse, as they may become distressed even when separated by a stable door, let alone when your horse goes out riding!

These animals originate from dry countries with sparse vegetation, so their dietary requirements are very different to horses. Obesity due to inappropriate feeding is a huge problem & this predisposes towards other diseases.

A good basic knowledge of the donkey is essential to their welfare. If you would like to own or foster donkeys or are an owner already but want to brush up on your knowledge, please come to our talk in February 2010. Please ring the clinic for further information or advice about your donkey or mule's upkeep on (01323) 815120.



## CLIENT TALK

### UPDATES ON DONKEY CARE

Cliffe Equine are fortunate to be able to host an evening in which the vets from the **Donkey Sanctuary** are coming to give an update & tips on donkey care.

The talk will entail general advice regarding upkeep and care, as well as in detail discussion about nutrition, dental care, common diseases and their management.

Please feel free to ask questions about general management or specific cases and we will try to be of help.

The talk will be held at Plumpton College on

**WEDNESDAY 10th FEBRUARY 2010; 7.30pm**

### UPCOMING SOCIAL DATE - RACE NIGHT

As a change to our usual Christmas Quiz social fundraising event; Cliffe Equine would like to invite you all to our all new **Race Night**. This evening will be held at Ringmer Football Club on Friday 22nd January 2010 and all monies raised will be donated to The Donkey Sanctuary.

The Donkey Sanctuary provide invaluable work towards to health and care of these animals at home and overseas. They provide outstanding support to vets and donkey owners, but as a charity rely totally on generous public support to continue their work.

For those of you familiar with our Xmas Quiz night, we hope you will come and bring some friends to the Race Night to enjoy the lively, but undoubtedly competitive atmosphere. As ever, there will be prizes for the winners and a chance for you to demonstrate your racing prowess!

Please ring the clinic to come and join us for the evening on (01323) 815120, we very much look forward to seeing you there!

## NEW DEFRA REGULATIONS ON MICROCHIPPING

The passport scheme for all equines has been in effect now for some years, but a recent alteration has been made. A European Regulation states that all equines registered **after 1st July 2009** are subject to compulsory microchipping.

While this requirement is not retrospective for older horses, microchips provide an essential link between a horse and its passport, We are offering the microchipping strengthening existing horse identification requirements. Such unique both the chip itself, implanting it and also identification of equidae may also completing the paperwork. **This offer prove useful for disease control and surveillance purposes and for the recovery of lost or stolen horses.**

Implanting a microchip is done by injecting the chip halfway down the left side of the crest of the neck. Most animals do not resent this procedure more than routine vaccination.



### Scanning an implanted microchip

We are offering the microchipping service for **£15 per horse**. This fee includes both the chip itself, implanting it and also completing the paperwork. **This offer runs until the 31st of December 2009 and applies to any horse or donkey, not just those born after 1st July.**

If you are unsure about these regulations or other aspects of the equine passport scheme, look at [www.defra.gov.uk/animalh/id-move/horses](http://www.defra.gov.uk/animalh/id-move/horses) or please ring the clinic on (01323) 815120.

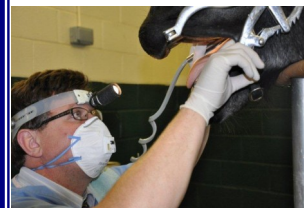
## NEW DENTAL TREATMENTS

### AVAILABLE

As you have read overleaf we now have a new periodontal unit to help us perform advanced dental work in your horse.

The unit provides us with the ability to **treat gum disease & diastemas (gaps)** reducing the likelihood of tooth abscesses and tooth removal. We are now also able to do **fillings** for tooth cavities so your horse can have a shiny Hollywood smile!

For information about these treatments, ring the clinic & speak to Karl Holliman or Penny Brownings.



Prices vary depending on the treatment necessary. Work of this nature is often covered by your insurance policy. It is essential to have routine dental checks done for your horse prior to any form of treatment.