



GETTING YOUR MARE BACK IN FOAL

If you are considering breeding your mare again this season let us know at the post-foaling check and we can discuss her individual needs.

The average gestation length for mares is approximately 340 days. If you consider the year has 365 days, this allows us 25 days to get the mare back in to foal in order to give birth at around the same time next year.

Post-Partum Mare

After foaling the mare's uterus rapidly goes into a state of involution whereby it is preparing for the next pregnancy. For most mares the first heat after foaling, or "foal heat" is a good time to examine the mare's recovering reproductive tract. Potential problems include fluid or infection in the uterus. We will also assess ovarian activity and may be able to order semen, or arrange a suitable stallion based on these findings.

Foal Heat

The foal heat (oestrus) usually takes place 6-10 days after foaling and although it is a true oestrus, conception rates at this oestrus are considered to be lower than the following heats. Usually we suggest avoiding covering on the foal heat and waiting for the first natural season after this, giving the mare's body time to recover from her recent foaling. However, in cases where time is of the essence it may be worth breeding your mare at the foal heat, accepting that conception rates will be lower. Recent research supports that we should only consider foal heat breeding if ovulation occurs at least 10 days post foaling. As a compromise we would recommend waiting till at least day 15 post foaling and "short cycling" the mare by giving her an injection of prostaglandin, which should bring her into a more fertile oestrus in 4-5 days, thereby saving time, but allowing the mare to recover.