

Weigh bridge you can borrow!

In collaboration with BHS Lothians, Equitait Veterinary Practice can now offer a portable weigh bridge which will be available on loan, free of charge, to all horse owners and other equine professionals.

While the weighbridge does not quantify obesity itself, the measurement of bodyweight is the most robust practical means of monitoring responses to diet. By weighing horses, owners will be able to assess how that weight is comparable to healthy standards of weight and use that information in combination with body condition score to take action, if necessary.

We often forget that the whole metabolism of the horse is designed over millions of years of evolution to account for when forage is plentiful or sparse and so an annual fluctuation in weight is normal. The weighbridge can be used to give horse owners the confidence in monitoring annual fluctuations and helping to ensure weight levels are appropriate for the time of year.

In addition, owners who know their horse's weight, will be able to make better informed decisions with regards to the payload they can legally tow or carry in terms of their equine transport. The equi3 is a revolutionary lightweight portable weighbridge that splits into three sections that can be transported in the back of a small car. It can easily be assembled by one person with minimal effort and connects wirelessly to a handset to give the user a reliable and accurate reading.

We are grateful to the BHS Lothians branch for making it possible to give horse owners in the area the access to this useful equipment. It has already been used in number of clinical cases to have a positive impact on the welfare of the local equine population. If you would like to borrow this portable weigh bridge, please contact Equitait Veterinary Practice on 01361 889106 or come and see it on the stand at Kelso show.



Acupuncture

Mary has recently completed her training to allow her to practice acupuncture. In horses, acupuncture is used for a variety of scenarios, including:

- Treating musculoskeletal and neuromuscular disorders;
- Identifying and eliminating causes of poor performance and training resistance; and
- Addressing other problems for example; circulatory and lymphatic faults; respiratory conditions (heaves or chronic obstructive pulmonary disease); digestive disorders (colic).

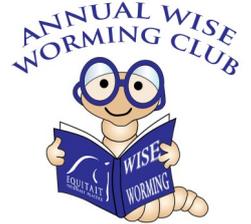
If you are interested in having your horse treated by Mary, please give the office a call on 01361 889106
Picture shows KK enjoying his acupuncture.

Dates for your diary

- Client evening 7-9pm, 15 August 2019 @ Little Spott, Dunbar
- Client evening 7-9pm 25th September 2019 @ Greenside, St Boswells
- Laser clinic 2nd week in October 2019

Last call for Worm Egg Counts this year!

Please order your WEC kits in time for a final count to be carried out no later than the start of October. Over Winter months the vast majority of the cyathostomins (small roundworms) become encysted in the gut wall so the results from WECs at this time of year are less reliable. A low or negative reading can give a false impression and does not necessarily reflect the numbers of encysted worms in the horse. WECs should be resumed in March/April.



Learning to play polo

Equitait staff recently had a day out learning to play polo with Thom Bell at Pittlesheugh, near Greenlaw. We spent the morning first learning the basics of how to hold the sticks and how to swing them correctly, but were quickly allowed on horseback and had great fun trying to combine all the skills we'd been taught. The competitive spirit of a couple of people certainly started to show though and the words "Katy, penalty" were soon ringing through the air!

A small competition at the end resulted in Colin's team winning.



Increase in costs of visits

We have been able to keep the price of our visit down for over five years despite inflation and increasing fuel and maintenance costs, however, from 1 August 2019 there will be a modest increase to reflect our increased running costs. Our zoned visit days are still cheaper and clients can still share the cost of visit with other horse owners on the same yard.

- Zoned day - £35
- Visit - £45

Adiponectin testing

Weight gain and obesity in equines can have severe and costly consequences for equine health. There are many tools we can use to diagnose and treat factors relating to obesity including simple blood tests. One test is adiponectin, that can be a good predictor of future laminitis and an indicator of Equine Metabolic Syndrome (EMS). This beneficial fat-derived hormone is produced from white adipose tissue and usually improves insulin sensitivity. Testing can be used to give a marker of obesity and provide an indication that the risk of laminitis is increased.

Weight loss programmes and management changes can return adiponectin values to normal levels so it can be a good objective comparison tool to use if you embark on a weight loss journey for your horse.

So far this Summer we have seen a significant number of laminitis cases and overweight horses. If you have concerns regarding your horse's weight or are interested in discussing the adiponectin blood test please call the Practice to speak to one of our vets.

Katy's research paper

The latest addition to our veterinary team has recently had a paper published in the Equine Veterinary Education Journal titled: 'Head tossing behaviour in six horses: Trigeminal-mediated head-shaking or musculoskeletal pain?' To read the abstract go to <https://doi.org/10.1111/eve.13084> and if you are interested in reading the whole paper please contact us in the office.

