



Equine Newsletter – Spring 2022

Contact
Emergency & out of hours

01785 712235
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Atypical myopathy 'Sycamore Poisoning'

Risk time spring/autumn

Atypical myopathy (also known as 'sycamore poisoning') is a severe and potentially fatal muscle disorder of horses caused by eating sycamore 'helicopter' seeds and, to a lesser extent sycamore leaves, that fall onto pasture in the autumn & winter or sycamore seedlings which grow in the Spring. The seeds and seedlings contain a toxin known as hypoglycin A (HGA). The toxin slows or stops energy production in muscle cells and particularly affects the heart and the muscles which enable the horse to stand and breathe.



Symptoms of Atypical Myopathy include:

Lying down / struggling to walk. Colic signs. Muscle stiffness, weakness and trembling. Lethargy, brown or dark red urine.

How can you prevent your horse from developing Atypical Myopathy?

Check fields regularly for sycamore seedlings, helicopter seeds can be blow up to 200 meters from adjacent areas.

AVOID grazing horses in fields with overhanging sycamore trees or fence off areas where seeds and leaves fall.

In the Autumn make sure horses have adequate forage / grazing and in the spring you can mow areas where sycamore seedlings are found, and collect and safely dispose of the cuttings.



Treatment is challenging and involves prompt identification, hospitalisation and intensive nursing and support and includes intravenous fluid and anti-inflammatory therapy.

Laminitis

Spring is fully upon us, the birds are singing and the grass is growing! As we often see a wave of laminitis at this time of year, it's vital to get our horses rugs off and watch their weight and manage their grazing carefully. If you are concerned about your horses weight, George our equine nurse can advise on body condition scoring and diet.

We know that laminitis risk status is strongly linked to both Cushing's disease and EMS (Equine Metabolic Syndrome), Identifying these diseases, starting treatment and getting them under control will hugely reduce your horse's risk of developing laminitis. We can easily screen for this disease with simple and inexpensive blood tests available from us.

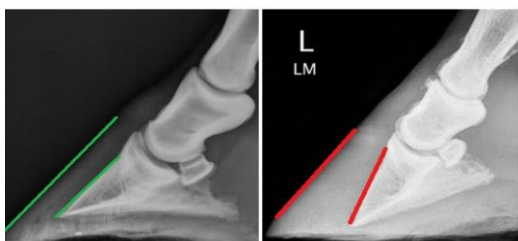


Some key warning signs include:

Your horse may seem stiff/sore for a few days after their farrier has trimmed/re-shod their feet. Their demeanour may change and may seem older or quieter in themselves. Not shedding their coat through the spring/early summer at the same rate as others around them. Drinking more through the winter, or their stable seeming to be wetter than normal this winter.

If you have any concerns or would like to book a blood test, please call the practice on **01785 712235** to discuss them with us.

Radiographic evidence of pedal bone rotation due to laminitis.



Practice News

Meet George Hunt RVN

We now have a dedicated Equine Veterinary Nurse to support our large animal team. George supports our vets both in the clinic and out on your yard. Her skills include injecting medications, wound management/bandaging and laser therapy. George has previously worked as a head nurse in a large equine hospital and also in Newmarket as a referral nurse, so her knowledge comes in useful in her new role with us on the road.

