



NEWSLETTER

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Our Quarterly Update

Make Finding You Easy with What3Words

Finding a field "next to the letterbox past the yellow sign" can be tricky—especially in the dark! That's where the What3Words app comes in. It gives every 3x3 metre square in the world a unique three-word address, making even the most remote locations easy to find.

If you can, please download the app and send us the What3Words location for where your horse is. It helps us get to you quickly and easily, no matter the time or place.

It's a simple way to make sure your horse gets help fast when it's needed most.



10% Off Faecal Egg Testing – Protect Your Horse and Prevent Worm Resistance



Regular faecal egg testing plays a vital role in keeping our equine patients healthy and thriving. Intestinal parasites can lead to a range of issues in horses, from poor condition and weight loss to serious complications like colic. By routinely monitoring worm burdens through faecal egg counts, we can detect problems early, before clinical signs even appear.

But it's not just about individual horse health. There is increasing concern within the veterinary community about the rise of anthelmintic (wormer) resistance. Over-worming, or using the wrong type of wormer at the wrong time, can contribute to resistance, making treatment less effective over time. This means routine worming "just in case" is no longer considered best practice.

That's why targeted worming, based on faecal egg count results, is now the gold standard. It allows us to treat only when necessary and to select the most appropriate wormer for the type of parasite present. This approach protects your horse's health and helps preserve the effectiveness of worming treatments for the future.

To support this best-practice approach, we're offering 10% off faecal egg testing for all equine patients throughout June and July. It's the perfect opportunity to get on top of your horse's parasite control and contribute to sustainable worming practices.

Speak to our team about your horse's worming plan, get in touch, we're here to help.

Caring for Your Horse in Hot Weather

Tips for travelling and competing

Horses are athletes that require special care, especially in hot weather, to perform at their best and avoid health risks. Here are some key tips for caring for your competition horse in hot conditions:

Hydration is key

Ensure your horse has access to fresh water at all times. Dehydration can lead to a range of issues, including poor performance and heat stress. Offer water regularly and always carry water with you in a vehicle, especially if you're in a remote location.

Traveling with your horse

Before hitting the road for the competition, make sure your horse is well-prepared for travel. Plan for breaks during long trips so that your horse can stretch its legs and hydrate. Ensure the transport vehicle is well-ventilated and kept at a comfortable temperature.

Provide shade and cooling areas

When your horse isn't competing, make sure it is in a shaded area. This will help regulate body temperature.

Monitor for signs of heat stress

Heat stress can be dangerous for your horse. Watch for signs such as excessive sweating, rapid or laboured breathing, and lethargy. If you notice any of these, take immediate action by moving the horse to a cooler area and offering water. If symptoms persist, contact your vet for advice.



Be mindful of feeding

Hot weather can affect your horse's appetite, but feeding is still important. Offer smaller, more frequent meals rather than large ones, and make sure the hay is not dusty, as dry, dusty hay can contribute to respiratory issues.

Rest and recovery

During a show, remember that rest is essential for recovery. Allow your horse enough downtime between events so that they can recover from physical exertion. A relaxed, comfortable horse is more likely to perform well.

Grooming and cooling after exercise

After a workout or competition, make sure to cool your horse down slowly. Begin by walking them for at least 10-15 minutes. Follow this with a good grooming session to remove sweat and prevent skin irritation. Consider using a cool wash-down with water and sponging down the legs and body, particularly the areas that sweat heavily, like the neck and chest.

By applying these details, you can help ensure that your horse stays cool, hydrated and comfortable. This not only enhances their performance but also helps keeps them healthy and safe throughout the competition season.



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Tendon & Ligament Injuries



Focusing on:

Superficial Digital Flexor Tendon (SDFT) Injury

Tendon and ligament injuries are a leading cause of reduced performance and time out of work in equine athletes. Among the most frequently affected structures is the Superficial Digital Flexor Tendon (SDFT), particularly in horses competing in high-speed or high-impact disciplines such as eventing, show jumping, and racing.

Clinical signs typically include:

- **Lameness:** Typically gradual onset and worsens with exercise. It can also sometimes be severe
- **Swelling:** Often noticeable along the back of the cannon bone
- **Heat:** Increased temperature over the affected area
- **Pain:** Sensitivity to palpation

In some cases, horses may show only subtle performance issues, particularly in the early stages.

Diagnosis is confirmed via palpation and ultrasonography, which allows for detailed assessment of fibre alignment, lesion size and location and involvement of the tendon sheath.

Regular ultrasonography during recovery helps monitor healing progress and guides adjustments to the rehabilitation programme.

Treatment is tailored to the severity of the injury but generally involves:

- Initial rest and anti-inflammatory management, including NSAIDs
- Controlled exercise protocols to encourage optimal fibre alignment and reduce re-injury risk
- Adjunctive therapies, such as platelet-rich plasma (PRP) or shockwave therapy, which may enhance tissue repair and reduce recovery time

The prognosis varies depending on the severity of the lesion, the discipline of the horse, and the quality of rehabilitation. Mild injuries can have a good outlook with careful management, while more significant tendon damage may require 6-12 months or more before return to full work and carry an increased risk of recurrence.

Early detection, accurate diagnosis, and a collaborative approach between the vet and owner are crucial to achieving the best outcome.

The Importance of Ultrasonography and Radiography in Equine Diagnostics

Understanding their roles and benefits

Ultrasonography and radiography are two of the most useful diagnostic imaging tools available in veterinary medicine for assessing the health of horses. Both techniques are essential in evaluating different aspects of a horse's condition, offering invaluable insight for accurate diagnosis and effective treatment. While they work in distinct ways, each method plays a crucial role in helping veterinarians identify issues that may not be detectable through physical exams alone.

Ultrasonography (Ultrasound):

How it works:

Ultrasonography uses high-frequency sound waves to create real-time images of internal structures. The sound waves are emitted from a probe and bounce back after encountering tissues, producing detailed images. The method does not involve any ionising radiation, making it a safe and non-invasive procedure.

Best for:

Ultrasound is primarily used for evaluating soft tissues, such as muscles, tendons, ligaments and internal organs like the liver, kidneys, and heart. It is particularly beneficial for examining tendons and ligaments, especially in cases of soft tissue injuries or inflammation. Vets also use it to assess joint structures, monitor pregnancies and detect internal abnormalities that may not be visible through other diagnostic means.

Advantages:

- **Non-invasive and safe:** There's no harmful radiation involved, making it a safer choice for both the horse and the veterinary team
- **Real-time imaging:** The ability to observe structures in motion, such as tendon movement, helps assess dynamic conditions and make accurate diagnoses
- **Detailed soft tissue visualisation:** Ultrasound provides exceptional clarity when imaging soft tissues, allowing for precise identification of injuries, tears, or inflammation



Radiography (X-rays):

How it works:

Radiography uses ionising radiation to create images of dense structures, primarily bones. The X-rays pass through the horse's body and their varying absorption rates by different tissues result in an image being produced on a film or digital detector.

Best for:

Radiographs are the go-to imaging method for evaluating bones. They are indispensable for detecting fractures, joint problems (such as arthritis) and bone alignment issues. Radiographs are also useful for examining certain soft tissue conditions in the chest and abdomen, such as lung abnormalities.

Advantages:

- **Superior bone imaging:** Radiographs excel at providing clear and detailed images of bone structures, enabling the detection of fractures, bone deformities, arthritis, and joint abnormalities
- **Comprehensive diagnostics:** In addition to bones, radiography can reveal issues in the chest and abdominal areas, such as respiratory or digestive problems
- **Well-established technique:** X-rays have been a cornerstone of veterinary diagnostics for decades, with a wealth of knowledge and experience backing their use



In Summary:

Both ultrasonography and radiography are invaluable diagnostic tools that complement each other in equine veterinary practice. Ultrasonography is essential for assessing soft tissue injuries and internal organ conditions, while radiography is the gold standard for evaluating bones and joint structures.

By using these tools in tandem, vets can obtain a comprehensive view of a horse's health, diagnosing conditions with greater accuracy and tailoring treatment plans for optimal recovery. Together, ultrasonography and radiography form a powerful diagnostic duo that plays a vital role in equine health.

Managing the Ageing Equine Athlete

Keeping older horses performing at their best



As horses age, their physical needs evolve, but with the right management, many equine athletes can continue to perform or enjoy an active lifestyle well into their senior years. Understanding the changes that come with age is essential for maintaining soundness, comfort and quality of life.

Ageing horses often experience degenerative joint disease, reduced muscle mass and flexibility, dental wear, and a general decline in cardiovascular and respiratory function. Recovery times after exercise or injury can also lengthen. These changes don't mean retirement is inevitable, but they do require thoughtful, tailored care.

Regular veterinary monitoring becomes increasingly important. Routine lameness assessments, dental examinations, and bloodwork can help catch subtle issues early, before they affect performance or comfort. Training programmes should also be adapted. Older horses benefit from longer warm-up and cool-down periods, reduced frequency of intense work, and varied low-impact exercise to maintain fitness while minimising stress on joints.

Managing discomfort is crucial. Joint supplements and appropriate use of anti-inflammatory medications can support mobility, while therapies such as intra-articular injections, physiotherapy, or acupuncture can offer additional relief. Nutrition also plays a key role. Senior horses often require diets rich in highly digestible fibre, high-quality protein, and targeted nutrients to support muscle maintenance, joint function, and digestive health.

Dental and hoof care should not be overlooked. Age-related changes in the mouth can affect chewing and nutrient absorption, making regular dental check-ups vital. Likewise, consistent and expert farriery helps maintain balance and comfort in ageing limbs.

Lastly, the horse's environment and lifestyle matter. Regular turnout, a calm and familiar routine, and a low-stress atmosphere support both physical health and mental wellbeing.

With proactive care and a collaborative approach between the owner, vet, farrier, physiotherapist, and nutritionist, the ageing equine athlete can remain active, engaged, and comfortable for many years. Whether still competing or simply enjoying an active retirement, a strategic management plan helps ensure the golden years are just that—golden.

