

Winter Newsletter



June - August 2009

Hello to everyone from the staff at the Warby St Veterinary Hospital. We hope that you and your animals are all well. It's time for another instalment of the Newsletter, this time for the cold season which has finally arrived, albeit with some nice warmer days thrown in.



Calving and Cattle Vaccination Seminar

Each year we try and organise a seminar or two to provide a forum for our clients to learn a little more about new products and techniques and to refresh some tried and trusted older ideas. This winter we are pleased to present a seminar for our clients on the topic of **Calving and Vaccination** for cattle in dairy and beef production.

Date: Wednesday 29th July 2009

Time: 7pm (a light supper will follow seminar and question time)

Location: TAFE Auditorium, Docker St, Wangaratta

Cost: \$5

Our most experienced cattle veterinarian, Richard Evans, will be making a presentation and a representative from Pfizer, a leading provider of cattle vaccines, will be in attendance to answer questions.

Richard will provide a comprehensive guide to calving, including discussion on timing, nutrition, what to expect and when to call the vet for assistance.

There will then be a discussion about vaccination of cattle in general, and a focus on new vaccine products like the Pestiguard vaccine for Bovine Pestivirus (Bovine Viral Diarrhoea Virus).

If you are interested in attending the seminar please give us a ring to book in your place. You can reach us on (03) 5721 7177.



MICROCHIPPING

Microchipping is now mandatory for all new registrations in Wangaratta
Microchipping is only **\$31.50**



Environmental Mastitis in Cattle

Environmental mastitis is caused by organisms that survive in the cow's surroundings, - including, in soil, manure, bedding, calving pads, water, or on body sites of the cow other than the mammary glands. Infection of the udder with these organisms is often opportunistic, taking advantage of circumstances that favour environmental contamination and changes in the mammary gland's sus-

ceptibility to infection. There are many bacteria in the environment and some biological characteristics then enable them to multiply within the udder.

Most cases of environmental mastitis occur within a few weeks of calving, when the cow's natural defence mechanisms are low and their udders have been in contact with mud and manure during calving. However, exposure of teat ends to environmental bacteria can occur at any time : before heifers have their first calf, during calving, at milking time or in paddocks during the lactation or dry periods.

During lactation, factors that predispose cows to infection with environmental bacteria include : milking udders that are wet or dirty, or administering intra-mammary infusions if the teat orifice is not sterile. During the early and late dry periods, absence of the keratin plug in the teat canal may make cows highly susceptible to infection.

Bacteria that commonly cause environmental mastitis are *Streptococcus uberis* or *Escherichia coli*. Other environmental organisms causing mastitis include other coliform bacteria, *Pseudomonas*, *Nocardia* and *Corynebacteria*.

The udder is very susceptible to infection at calving and many infections detected in early lactation are established at calving time.

The ideal place for cows to calve is a clean sheltered dry area. The ideal situation is a paddock with a good cover of grass, not irrigated or contaminated with milking shed or feed pad effluent, on an elevated site that is not wet, boggy or poorly drained.

Unfortunately, such areas are rare on most Australian dairy farms, and most farm managers choose to use calving paddocks where the cows can easily be supervised especially in areas of high rainfall during the calving period.

Calving paddocks can work if they are large enough so that grass cover is maintained. However, it is common for small areas which perhaps provide shelter, to be overused and become boggy. The only practical solution is to fence off such areas until they regenerate. When cows are calving on grass, it is also important to ensure that preventative measures for metabolic diseases have been taken.

Mastitis in freshly calved heifers may result from infection that has occurred during their development since puberty, or in the few weeks immediately before calving.

Heifers may be particularly susceptible to infection during the calving period. This is because they tend to spend longer calving, especially on the ground, and they can suffer from some degree of udder oedema that may reduce the ability of the teat and udder tissues to resist bacterial challenge. Field observations indicate a greater tendency of animals with oedematous teats to develop *Strep. uberis* infections.

It was noted by researchers that many "overconditioned" heifers leaked milk prior to calving, and had a higher prevalence of mastitis. They believed that preferential treatment of heifers during the calving period may reduce the incidence of new infections, and suggested several factors to aid mastitis control in heifers including :

Minimising exposure to muddy conditions.

Milking them out as soon as possible after calving.

Apply effective teat sanitiser after every milking.

Richard Evans, Warby St Veterinary Hospital

"King Valley Run"

A service provided every Tuesday charging TRAVEL fees from Greta, Moyhu or Milawa.

"Beechworth & Myrtleford Valley Run"

A service provided every Thursday charging TRAVEL fees from Markwood, Everton, Beechworth and Myrtleford

Stem Cell Treatment for Equine Tendon Injuries



Tendon injuries are a common reason for racing horses to be forced into an unscheduled spell. They also have the potential to prematurely finish the career of a racing horse. There have been various traditional methods of dealing with these injuries, but there is little evidence that any of these treatments are superior to prolonged rest and controlled exercise. Warby St Veterinary Hospital has been using a new treatment from Vet Biotechnology Australia that uses stem cells to help speed the recover process and provide a better success rate for return to racing.

The horse relies on the elastic structure of its tendons during high speed motion. Hard training and racing leads to degradation of the tendons with the possibility of tears that leave a core lesion in the tendon. This type of injury in the digital flexor tendons is commonly called a 'bowed tendon'. Left alone these lesions heal with inflexible scar tissue, which is inelastic and can impede the performance of the tendon and therefore the performance of the horse. The use of stem cells in treating tendon injuries actually allows the tendon to heal with real tendon tissue and produces a repaired area as good as the original tendon.

Adult mesenchymal stem cells are the body's natural means for repairing damaged or diseased tissues. These cells can be harvested from the bone marrow of the horse with the injured tendon or alternately can be collected from the umbilical cord of the foal when it is born. The umbilical cells can be stored for the life of the horse and act as a type of insurance policy should it injury a tendon in its career.

In most cases we collect a bone marrow sample from the sternum of the horse and ship it to the laboratory for processing. This multiplies the stem cell numbers and purifies the sample. The product that the laboratory returns to us contains more than 4 million stem cells without other cell types which may impede the efficacy of the treatment. The stem cells are then injected back into the horse's injured tendon where they can perform their healing function. Follow up ultrasound scans reveal a rapid filling of the core lesion and improvements in the linear fibre pattern.

The horse still requires an extended rehabilitation, but the chances of a successful return to racing is vastly improved. One study has shown that 71% of horses treated returned to full work/competition without re-injury of the affected tendon. This is much better than the standard recommendations for treatment of tendon injuries.

The stem cell therapy is an exciting development in the treatment of equine tendon injuries. Warby St Veterinary Hospital is pleased to continue to provide cutting edge treatment options to our performance horse clients.

Why Not Get Your Pet Desexed Now?!

The RSPCA is currently subsidising our routine desexing!

\$25 off male desexing

\$30 off female desexing

Please call the clinic on 5721 7177 to book you pet in!

Thankyou to the RSPCA for their wonderful support.

PUPPY



PRESCHOOL

We are always taking enrolments for our puppy preschool. The classes are open to any pup from 8 to 16 weeks of age that has had at least its first puppy vaccination. The classes provide a means for your pup to socialise with other dogs of a similar age and also for them to learn some basic obedience. It is also especially good for new dog owners as you will find that you may learn even more than your pup does!

There is a growing body of evidence that shows the period from 6 to 16 weeks of age to be a key time in your pup's development. It is important that the pup experiences as many different stimuli during this time as possible. It is also necessary for them to socialise with other dogs and people so that they become polite and well behaved no matter their company or environment. We have many comments from previous puppy preschool attendees that their new pup is much better behaved and open to new people and places than their older dogs that didn't have the chance to attend.

Puppy Preschool is run over 4 Tuesday evenings and a new class starts every month. The classes are run by a qualified and experienced Puppy Preschool instructor. The cost for the 4 weeks is \$88. Please give us a call on 5721 7177 to enroll your pup today.



We would like to take this opportunity to welcome our newest vet, Sarah Norman, to the practice and to farewell Christine Gee. Sarah is filling the shoes of Christine who has decided to pursue her interest in veterinary chiropractic work on a full time basis. Christine will still be in the district offering her chiropractic services, and promises from time to time to grace us with her presence as a locum.

Sarah has a keen interest in horses professionally and recreationally. She is looking forward to taking on some of our equine case load. Sarah has been working elsewhere in the North East for the last year. She has also just attended the annual conference of the Australian Veterinary Association (AVA) so will be coming to us with a lot of new ideas and techniques.

We look forward to working with Sarah. Please make her feel welcome when you see her in the hospital or out on your properties.



Newsletters online

Would you like to receive our quarterly newsletters via Email?

If so, fill out the form below and drop it in to us at Warby Street.

Name:
(first name) (surname)

Email Address: