

Equine Health Line

January 2010

Online Pharmacy

Our online pharmacy is up and running! Please visit our website at

www.peneq.com.

FIRST TIME PHARMACY

VISITORS: You will need to establish a login & password to enter the on-line pharmacy. Call our office for assistance or to register and avoid the 48 hr online enrollment delay!

You will find prescription and non-prescription products, such as

Gastrogard, Adequan, Legend, Vetwrap, and dewormers, at prices competitive with online pharmacies. Free shipping on orders over \$39! As always, you can pick up medications at our clinic!

Website

Our website is getting a makeover! We will have a section dedicated to you, our clients, where you can post events, photos and news about what you and your horse have been doing! Please email us at

web@peneq.com

with your event , story, and pictures! Or submit directly via our website.



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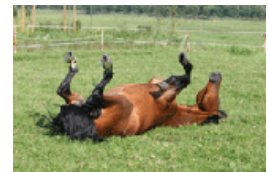
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To insure or not to insure? That is the question!

Horse insurance has been around for many years, but in the past 10-15 years it has become much more common for horse owners of all kinds to purchase mortality and major medical insurance. Although adding another expense to your current cost may not sound appealing, should your horse sustain an injury or require colic surgery, you'll be glad you had it.



Coverage varies with each insurance company, but in many cases they will cover not only costs associated with illness, but also those associated with lameness. Diagnostics such as bone scan, ultrasound and MRI can often be claimed, as well as many treatments, including stem cells, Tildren and IRAP. Because you must have a mortality policy with every major medical policy, the costs of these combined policies can get pricey depending on the value you claim on your mortality policy. However, if this coverage is out of your price range, you may want to consider PreventiCare, a program offered by Pfizer Animal Health which pays up to \$5,000 towards colic surgery. There are program requirements that need to be followed in order to maintain coverage, but it's a good idea for those of you who worry about the expense of colic surgery.

Regardless of whether your horse is insured or not, the time to think about what you would do for you horse in an emergency is NOW. Formulate a plan and if you need help, our veterinarians here at PenEq will be happy to help you put one together.

From the Office

Happy Holidays

The Equinosis

Lameness Locator

The Equinosis is a new device used to objectively evaluate lameness. While nothing can compare to the well-developed eye of a trained diagnostician, the Equinosis helps us to place a numerical value to the degree of lameness. These numbers can then be used to re-evaluate the lameness over time and establish a consistent value between clinicians.

The machine itself is composed of three accelerometers, with one placed on the poll, one on the right front fetlock and one on the lumbosacral region. From these three locations, the Equinosis can extrapolate calculations to all four feet. It is currently being used here at PenEq along to augment our lameness evaluation.

Upcoming Events

12.31.09

New Year's Eve Party

<http://www.smcha.org>

Email us your events:
web@peneq.com

What is ASU?

ASU is short for avocado soybean unsaponifiable extracts. ASU is the latest fad in oral joint supplements and can be found in several different products currently on the market. A controlled study done at Colorado State University's Equine Orthopaedic Lab showed ASU decreased cartilage degradation and synovial hemorrhage as compared to a placebo treatment. Clinical lameness scores, however, were not effected. While clinical effect and pain is the most easily evaluated aspect of joint disease, cartilage preservation is equally important. If your horse is already on an oral supplement, you may consider switching to one containing ASU. Our veterinarians here at PenEq consider your horse's health top priority and would be happy to discuss oral joint supplements with you before you make the change.

CUSHINGS DISEASE

Cushing's disease is the common name for hyperadrenocortism, which is an uncontrolled production of corticosteroids. In horses, Cushing's disease is most commonly associated with a benign pituitary tumor that causes increased secretion of a prohormone that is then released into the bloodstream where it becomes an active corticosteroid. It is extremely common in older horses, with an estimated prevalence of 40% in horses 23 years and older.



The most common signs of Cushing's include abnormal shedding patterns, loss of muscle mass, a pot-bellied appearance, increased thirst and urination, lethargy and laminitis. While it is certainly necessary to test your horse for Cushing's disease if they show any signs of the disease, as your horse ages, it is always a good idea to do a "dex-suppression" test so you have a baseline by which you can monitor your horse's status. It is also advisable to test your "senior" horse as the development of this disease is usually insidious and early treatment can stave off the long term effects.

Pergolide is the drug of choice used to treat Cushing's disease. For those of you with older horses, it may already be a part of your daily routine. Though proper storage can prolong the life and efficacy of Pergolide, the drug breaks down rather quickly. Thus, Pergolide SHOULD NOT be purchased in more than a 30 day supply. Also, because Pergolide is compounded, it is not subjected to the same FDA regulations as approved products. This can lead to inconsistencies in concentration and quality. Therefore, it is recommended to purchase your Pergolide, or any compounded drug, through a reputable pharmacy solicited by your veterinarian. If you think your horse has signs of Cushing's disease or wish to discuss your current medication schedule, please contact one of our PenEq veterinarians.

Tip of the Month: Winter preparedness

- ✓ Make sure you have temperature appropriate blankets. If your horse is body clipped, he/she will become chilled more easily.
- ✓ Pick out feet on a daily basis. Increased rain in the winter months can lead to muddy paddocks. When hooves get packed in mud, it increases the risk of thrush and abscesses.
- ✓ Sudden changes in temperature can often cause your horse to drink less than normal. Providing easy access to fresh water or adding a bucket of water with electrolytes encourages drinking.