



# Straight from the Horse's mouth

Don't forget our *reduced price*  
**Gastroscope clinic dates**  
Sevington – 7th July, 4th August, 1 September  
Benenden – 16th July, 20 August, 17th September



## Poisonous Plants

Can you recognise these poisonous plants / trees and hedges?  
See answers at bottom of page

At this time of year when horses are spending more time outside grazing in the sun it is crucial that any potentially toxic plants are removed from their paddocks.

- Equine Symptoms of plant poisoning;
- Contracted pupils
  - Convulsions
  - Breathing difficulties
  - Narcosis

Many plant poisons are cumulative, meaning they build up in an animal's system over time, so if your horse eats them with no immediate effects, it doesn't mean that they are 'immune'.

Poisoning can kill a horse in just a few hours so if you suspect that a horse has eaten a plant they shouldn't, call your vet immediately.



**Methods of payments....** Don't forget you can pay your vet's bill by BACS to HSBC. Sort code 40-08-32 account number 62065509

### Vets out and about this summer

Milbourn Equine Vets will be in attendance providing Veterinary support at some Prestigious British Eventing fixtures this year;

- **Brightling Park International Horse Trials 12 -13th July**
- **Chilham Castle International Horse Trials 2-3rd August**
- **Firle Place International Horse Trials 30-31st August**

**Rye Country Fair Horse & Dog Show** Our Rye practice will be attending on Saturday 16th August with their stand. Pop in and say Hello.

**Chilham Castle Hunter Trial 31 Aug**  
Our Ashford branch will be there with their trade stand.



- ANSWERS**
1. Ragwort
  2. Foxglove
  3. Nightshade Plant (inc. Deadly & Woody)
  4. Hemlock
  5. St John's Wort
  6. Trees/Hedges
  7. Rhododendron
  8. Laurel
  9. Laburnum
  10. Oak
  11. Privet
  12. Sycamore

## FREE CUSHING'S TEST LAB FEES

Back for the third year until the end of October, simply download your voucher from [www.talkaboutlaminitis.co.uk](http://www.talkaboutlaminitis.co.uk) and arrange for your vet to come out and take a blood sample.



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Summer Issue 2014  
**MILBOURN**  
Equine  
Our clients quarterly newsletter  
[www.milbournequine.co.uk](http://www.milbournequine.co.uk)



By Reuben Whittaker BVSc, MRCVS



## Foaling and care of the new born foal

This is often a very stressful time for the owner, so here is a bullet point article to lead you through the whole process of foaling and making sure there are as few complications as possible. It will also help you to identify problems early and call in the cavalry (That's us!)

### Foaling

#### 1st stage labour:

This can last about 1-4 hrs, during which time the mare may become restless, start to sweat and show mild colic symptoms including flank watching. The rupture of the chorioallantois occurs near the end of the 1st stage of labour which will result in the release of allantoic fluid which will gush out of the vulva.

#### 2nd stage labour:

The mare is usually laterally recumbent by now and will experience strong abdominal contractions. Within a few minutes the unruptured amniotic sac should appear at the vulva. This is WHITE in colour. If the membranes are RED in colour this indicates that the chorioallantois has not ruptured (RED BAG). This indicates premature placental separation and is an emergency. The membranes should be ruptured immediately and the foal delivered, even if this has to be started before the cavalry (That's us again!) arrives.

Stage 2 should take no longer than twenty minutes until the foal is delivered. If the mare does not seem to be getting on with it during this period then you should call for veterinary assistance immediately.

When the foal is delivered the mare often lays down for a period of time. This should be encouraged as it gives time for blood from the placenta to flow into the foal before it detaches. The foal will often break its own umbilicus when it struggles to get up.

#### 3rd stage labour:

This is the expulsion of the placenta after foaling. This should be complete within three hours.

#### Care of the newborn foal.

The foal should be up and sucking within the first 2-4 hrs of birth. If not sucking by then it is important to get veterinary attention ASAP. The foal's digestive tract absorbs antibodies from the mare's colostrum best in the first 8hrs of life. After this period the amount absorbed diminishes until 32hrs when no more can be absorbed. A sensible precaution would be to blood sample the foal about 18hrs after birth to see what its antibody status is and if low then plasma can be given intravenously to boost immunity. This is not without risk and so it is important to blood sample first to see if required.

The foal is at increased risk of low antibody transmission if it doesn't suck well in the first 18hrs or if the mother is a maiden mare with poor colostrum quality, or runs milk for a period of time before foaling.

The foal usually passes meconium (first faeces) in the first 2hrs of life. It is important this happens as if it doesn't then it will become constipated and not suck. This meconium impaction leads to colic if not resolved quickly. Phosphate enemas are usually successful particularly if given early.

The foal's navel needs treating soon after birth with a suitable product (iodine based) and ideally repeated twice a day for a couple of days.

The foal may have in-turned eyelids (entropion) which should be looked for in the newborn and if present corrected.

If any tendon contraction or laxity is present then speak to the vet as splints may need to be used and other techniques.

#### Care of the mare post foaling:

Most mares pass the placenta within 3hrs of foaling. If this has not happened by 6 hours then veterinary assistance should be sought as the mare soon becomes toxic if the placenta is not removed. Injectable oxytocin often helps coupled with antibiotics / antiendotoxins. Once the placenta has been removed we would recommend copious flushing of the uterus with saline until the fluid runs clear followed by a few days of oral antibiotics. Never be tempted to pull hard on the placenta as it may tear leaving some inside which leads to uterine infections.

It is important to check the placenta to ensure it is complete and that no evidence of infection is present. It looks a little like a pair of pyjama bottoms. If in doubt as to whether all is present then it should weigh about 10% of the foal weight.

If the mare becomes unwell over the next 72hrs then it is important to re-examine her as internal bleeding is possible, as are uterine tears or other problems.

**It is worth stressing that all these problems are uncommon and most foaling goes without hitch. It is always worth getting us out to check the mare and foal between 12 and 24hrs after foaling even if everything goes well. If you have any concerns then err on the side of caution and call us out sooner rather than later.**