



**Milbourn Equine**

*Veterinary Dedication, Care and Trust*

## STRAIGHT FROM THE HORSE'S MOUTH

## GIVE YOUR HORSE A PRESENT THIS CHRISTMAS



**Milbourn Equine offer a Winter Health Check for your horse. This covers a full clinical examination of heart, lungs, skin, eyes and action, a blood sample is taken to test your horse's internal organs and a faecal sample is also taken and tested for worms (lab fees included in price).**

Whilst there the vet can also take a look inside your horse's mouth and check to see if any dental work is needed. This is also a great opportunity to discuss any queries you have about your horse's health or performance. Our winter health checks are especially useful if you have a veteran horse who may struggle with the changing weather and are also advisable for competition horses to resolve any issues quickly and ensure they are in peak condition ready for the competition season ahead. **Only £95.00 including VAT (Visit fee not included, can be performed on a zone visit). Call now to book an appointment...**

## Christmas Greetings

Milbourn Equine would like to wish all our clients, both two and four legged a very Merry Christmas and a Healthy and Happy 2015.

# Looking after the elderly horse

More and more horses and ponies are living for longer and becoming geriatrics (defined as aged 20 years and over) due to advancing veterinary medicine and owners become better and better at spotting early signs of disease, however just because they are classed as geriatric does not mean that they aren't young at heart and have to be retired!



The topic of 'What things should I look out for in my old horse' is something that is often discussed at routine vaccinations. As a horse ages it is important to monitor for certain health problems which are commonly seen in an ageing population;

**Dental Problems** are common and may manifest as difficulty with the bit, reduced appetite, weight loss or headshaking. Six monthly dental checks are recommended for horses over 15 years old (we check teeth free of charge at annual vaccinations).

**Low grade lameness** is to be expected as osteoarthritis sets in, this is often put down to as 'stiffness'. Most of these conditions can be improved with treatment after the lameness is localised to a particular joint or area.

Older horses (especially ponies) commonly develop **Cushings disease**. The clinical signs can include any of the following: curly coat, recurrent laminitis, a 'pot bellied' appearance, lethargy, recurrent infections, passing more urine and drinking more. This condition can be managed once it has been diagnosed with a blood test.

**Liver disease** is much less common than other diseases of old age however it can be an organ that we consider in a variety of cases as signs of liver disease can be extremely varied and at times vague. These signs can include depression, reduced appetite and weight loss which can be extremely difficult for us as vets to appreciate as we are only likely to see your horse once or twice a year, therefore you as the person that sees your horse daily are best placed to alert us of any subtle changes.



# Stuck for last minute stocking fillers?



Why not treat your horse to a Milbourn Equine First Aid kit, ideal for the yard or horsebox for those small wounds! Includes bandaging and poulticing materials, digital thermometer, hibiscrub, hydrogel, swabs, gloves and an Equine First Aid leaflet.



Or one of our Milbourn Equine supplements, details on our website.



Christmas gift vouchers are available from Milbourn Equine.

## Opening hours over Christmas



Christmas Eve 8.30am – 2pm	Sevington 8am - 2pm
Christmas Day - Closed	Sevington Closed
Boxing Day - Closed	Sevington Closed
29th Dec – 8.30am – 5.30pm	Sevington 8am - 5pm
30th Dec – 8.30am – 5.30pm	Sevington 8am - 5pm
31st Dec – 8.30am – 5.00pm	Sevington 8am - 5pm
Thurs 1st January - Closed	Sevington Closed

Should you require emergency treatment over the festive period please call our normal office number, your call will be answered by our out of hours emergency team who will listen carefully and take your details and get the duty vet to call you back.

## Looking after the elderly horse

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Other signs can include diarrhoea, colic and increased drinking.

Many older horses struggle to maintain their condition, especially over the winter months. If weight loss is sudden or dramatic we will investigate to rule out concurrent disease. However often a change in diet is all that's necessary, horses become less efficient at extracting nutrients from their feed as they age. It is important to



maintain fibre content even if the horse is struggling to eat hay or haylage. A hay replacement diet can be created with chaff, sugar beet and soaked pony nuts. We can advise you or put you in touch with a nutritionist if you feel your horse would benefit from a dietary change.

Older horses and ponies struggle more with extremes of weather than their younger friends. However they generally benefit from the low grade exercise that turnout provides and would stiffen up if kept indoors for long periods. Therefore we recommend that they remain turned out with the benefit of good rugs and a field shelter, in all but the most extreme weather conditions.

With modern medicine and treatment options it is possible for many horse and ponies to carry on working well into their twilight years. We have many patients in the practice who are still in regular work in their 20s and 30s!

Take a look at our website where there is a wealth of information for you:

[www.milbournequine.co.uk](http://www.milbournequine.co.uk)

