



Winter 2014

## Winter Newsletter 2014

Welcome to our winter newsletter! We have some seasonal news and an exciting New Year offer in store for you. Don't forget that our newsletters are available online at [www.allanheathequine.co.uk](http://www.allanheathequine.co.uk) and the website also has information pages, a handy vaccination date calculator and details of our most updated offers.

## Winter Woes - Mud Fever

Mud fever is a skin condition caused by the bacterium *Dermatophilus congolensis* (though often multiple bacterial species are involved). The bacteria live in soil and thrive in wet conditions and their spores survive year to year. Mud fever bacteria cannot colonise healthy skin and during winter horses tend to get softened, chapped skin from constant wetting and drying of the legs due to rain and mud, which allows the bacteria to take hold. Even small cuts and wounds can allow the bacteria in so your horse doesn't necessarily have to be covered in mud to get mud fever! Horses with white or hair-

less pasterns tend to suffer more and if your horse has feather mites or ringworm he or she may be at increased risk of developing mud fever due to breaks in the skin.

Treating mud fever can be tricky and the area should be thoroughly washed with Hibiscrub then dried thoroughly. Hair should be clipped away and antibiotic cream applied (please call in to the office and ask about our "Heel Dressing" which is specially designed for mud fever). Repeat this process daily and dispose of the infectious scabs with care! Prevention is better than cure! To reduce the risk of mud fever:



Signs of mud fever include crusty, scabby lesions and open sores on the heels and pastern.

- Don't hose off muddy legs, allow to dry and brush off. If hosing is necessary ensure legs are dried properly afterwards (use a hairdryer or a clean towel, making sure you don't rub mud into the skin!)
- Inspect legs daily for signs of mud fever - this is essential!
- Ensure bedding, stable bandages & brushing boots are clean and dry.

## Coughs & Colds

Just like us, horses suffer from viral infections in the winter. It is not unusual to see runny noses & eyes (with a clear, colourless discharge), often accompanied by a dry, occasional cough. These infections are usually mild though can spread very quickly between horses. It is important to isolate ill horses

from others to prevent transmission of the infection and contact us for advice and for symptomatic relief. Equine Influenza is a potential cause of such infections in non-vaccinated horses so it is important to ensure your horse's vaccinations are up to date. If your horse is showing any signs of respiratory



infection please contact us for advice as he or she may need anti-inflammatories and a bronchodilator to help him/her breathe more freely.

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24 hour  
Emergency cover

## FREE VISIT SCHEME

We offer free visits for vaccinations - please ring 10-14 days before your vaccination is due. If we are in your area we will call you in the morning and see if you're available for us to pop in and do your vaccination.

We now have a handy vaccination date calculator on our website - have a look under the "Latest News" section.

## NEW YEAR OFFER Refer A Friend

If you refer a friend as a new client to us and they book a visit between 1st January and 31st March you will receive £20 off your bill and your friend will be entitled to a free visit.

Please call us or see our website for more details.

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

If you'd like to receive newsletters via email please email [newsletter@allanheathequine.co.uk](mailto:newsletter@allanheathequine.co.uk) with "sign up" in the subject field.

**Have a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!**