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EQUINE HOSPITAL

Managing the Overweight Horse

Josie Walker DVM

Do you have a horse that just looks at a flake of hay and gains 10 pounds? When it comes to easy keeping horses, there is no doubt that it can be very challenging getting them to lose weight. If dietary restrictions are not put into place, this overweight horse can develop multiple issues, two of the largest being Equine Metabolic Syndrome characterized by insulin resistance (IR) and laminitis.

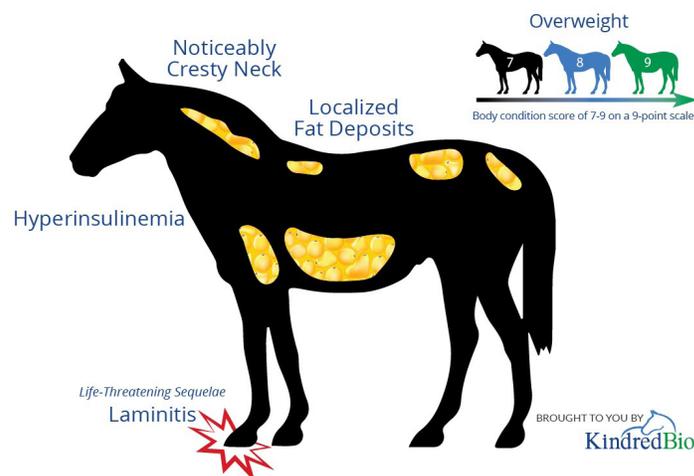
To avoid these disorders, it is critical to help the extremely overweight horse reduce body fat. One major way to help them lose weight is to reduce the glycemic index of their diet. This is done by eliminating sugars and decreasing the NSC (non-structural carbohydrates). High NSC feed elicits a glycemic response and is essentially like the horse eating a candy bar. High NSC feed can exacerbate IR and even cause GI disturbances, both of which could trigger a laminitic episode. A forage quality test can determine the percent NSC in the hay. A good rule of thumb for insulin resistant horses is to keep the NSC under 10 percent. Another way to help decrease NSC is to soak the forage in water for at least 30-60 minutes, being sure to discard the water prior to feeding. Often, alfalfa is lower in NSC than grass hay and may be a better option for insulin resistant horses. However because alfalfa is very calorically dense, discuss with your veterinarian prior to incorporating it into your metabolic horse's diet. It is also recommended to decrease pasture time as pastures can contain high levels of NSC. If it is necessary to graze the horse, it is recommended to graze them earlier in the morning to avoid grasses with higher sugar content in the middle of the day and evening.

To help reduce body fat, calories should be restricted, and an exercise regimen should be followed. Horses should be fed 1.5-2% of their body weight which equates to 15-20 lbs of feed per day for a 1,000 lb horse. It is important to reduce rations gradually and no more than 10% over a 7-10 day period. By gradually reducing their ration, it will decrease the likelihood of GI disturbances. In order to accurately assess how much hay the horse is receiving, a scale should be used to weigh it. An easy way to help reduce calories is to cut out treats, apples, carrots, grains, etc. Depending on your horse's level of soundness, regular exercise should be encouraged. Recent studies have shown that a minimum of 15 minutes of trotting is needed to get your horse in a fat burning zone. However, if your horse is already showing signs of laminitis, you and your veterinarian may need to implement a regimen that is safe for your horse.



It is important to remember that weight loss should be a gradual process, and it can take months to get the horse to its ideal weight. Keep in mind that when trying to decrease the horse's weight, each Body Condition Score (BCS) is about 40-50 pounds. If the horse is 9/9 on the BCS scale, they would have to lose 160-200 pounds to be at their ideal weight (5/9 BCS). Weight loss can be a long and frustrating journey, but with the right nutrition, exercise regimen and veterinarian's guidance, your equine companion will be much happier, and many metabolic disorders may be avoided.

Equine Metabolic Syndrome in the Horse (EMS)



Importance of Vaccinating for Rabies

Ty Marshall-Blanche DVM

Rabies is a virus that is passed via the saliva of an infected animal (typically a skunk, bat, fox, or raccoon). While the word rabies may trigger images straight from horror films of rabid dogs in your mind, rabies can also affect horses and other livestock. When a horse is infected with rabies, the virus can be in the body several weeks, even months, before the horse shows clinical signs. Early signs include colic, lameness, depression, fever, and agitation. These signs progress to the full neurologic form of the disease and include excessive salivation, paralysis of the jaw and throat, inability to swallow, and seizures. When horses have excessive salivation, they can pass the virus on to people and other animals. Unfortunately, there is no treatment for rabies. An unvaccinated horse will die within a few days of developing clinical signs.

The American Association of Equine Practitioners (AAEP) lists rabies as one of its “core” vaccinations. Core vaccinations are defined as those that protect from diseases that are endemic to a region, those with potential public health significance, required by law, virulent/highly infectious, and/or those posing a risk of severe disease. Core Vaccines have clearly demonstrated efficacy and safety, and thus exhibit a high enough level of patient benefit and low enough level of

risk to justify their use in the majority of patients. The current recommendation for rabies is to vaccinate adult horses, foals, and broodmares annually.

In 2020, seven bats tested positive for rabies in Washoe and Clark counties; and our local Animal Disease Laboratory confirms an average of 10 and 20 cases of bat rabies each year. If your horse is unvaccinated and exposed to rabies, state guidelines mandate immediate euthanasia or a 6 month strict quarantine. Alternatively if your horse is current on rabies vaccination and exposed to a rabid animal, state guidelines mandate a booster vaccination and 45 days of observation.

Because rabies is 100% fatal and 100% preventable, we strongly recommend it be a routine part of your horse’s vaccination schedule. You can protect yourself from rabies by avoiding contact with any wildlife that look sick, disoriented, partially paralyzed, seem bold or aggressive, or are out during the day when they are nocturnal. It is also important to wash any bites from suspect animals immediately and seek professional medical help. For questions about rabies, the rabies vaccine, and prevention, please do not hesitate to contact your veterinarian.

WHAT IS RABIES?

Rabies is a virus that is passed via the saliva of an infected animal (typically a skunk, bat, fox, or raccoon).



WHAT DOES RABIES LOOK LIKE?

Early signs include colic, lameness, depression, fever, and agitation. These signs progress to the full neurologic form of the disease & include excessive salivation, paralysis of the jaw & throat, inability to swallow, & seizures. Death follows within days of clinical signs.



DO WE ACTUALLY SEE RABIES IN NEVADA?

Our local Animal Disease Laboratory confirms between 10 and 20 cases of bat rabies each year.



CAN WE PREVENT RABIES?

There is a safe and effective vaccine available. The current AAEP recommendation is to vaccinate adult horses, foals, and broodmares annually.



WHY VACCINATE?

Rabies is 100% fatal and 100% preventable.



WHAT HAPPENS IF MY HORSE IS EXPOSED?



-If your horse is unvaccinated: Immediate euthanasia or 6 month quarantine

-If your horse is current on rabies vaccination: A booster vaccination and 45 days of observation.

Update on 6 Month Health Certificates

We regret to inform you the state of Nevada is no longer accepting Extended Equine Certificates of Veterinary Inspection (EECVI). We apologize for any inconvenience this may cause, and we are hoping changes can be made in the future to allow us to issue them for you again.

SPRING VACCINE CLINIC SCHEDULE

Area	Day	Date
Washoe Valley 1	Wed	3-Mar
Washoe Valley 2	Sat	6-Mar
Washoe Valley 3	Wed	17-Mar
Washoe Valley 4	Thurs	25-Mar
Washoe Valley 5	Tues	6-Apr
Washoe Valley 6	Sat	10-Apr
SW Reno 1	Tues	2-Mar
SW Reno 2	Thurs	11-Mar
SW Reno 3	Sat	13-Mar
SW Reno 4	Wed	24-Mar
SW Reno 5	Thurs	22-Apr
SW Reno 6	Sat	24-Apr
Mt. Rose/Pleasant Valley 1	Wed	3-Mar
Mt. Rose/Pleasant Valley 2	Sat	3-Apr
Mt. Rose/Pleasant Valley 3	Tues	6-Apr
Lemmon/Antelope Valley 1	Wed	10-Mar
Lemmon/Antelope Valley 2	Tues	23-Mar
Lemmon/Antelope Valley 3	Sat	27-Mar
Lemmon/Antelope Valley 4	Wed	14-Apr
Spanish Springs 1	Thurs	4-Mar
Spanish Springs 2	Tues	16-Mar
Spanish Springs 3	Sat	20-Mar
Spanish Springs 4	Wed	7-Apr
North Valleys 1	Tues	16-Mar
North Valleys 2	Thurs	8-Apr
Golden/Sun Valley 1	Tues	9-Mar
Golden/Sun Valley 2	Thurs	1-Apr
Carson/Dayton 1	Tues	2-Mar
Carson/Dayton 2	Thurs	18-Mar
Carson Dayton 3	Wed	7-Apr
Toll Rd/VC Highlands 1	Thurs	18-Mar
Toll Rd/VC Highlands 2	Tues	13-Apr
West Reno/Verdi-Mogul	Wed	31-Mar
Palomino Valley 1	Mon	8-Mar
Palomino Valley 2	Mon	22-Mar
Stagecoach/Silver Springs 1	Fri	19-Mar

SPRING CLINIC PRICES

Farm Call	23
Physical/Wellness Exam	23
Core Innovator with Rabies	50
EWT WN Innovator	40
Vetera Gold (EWT, West Nile, F/R)	84
Flu/Rhino	40
Rabies	23
Deworm	18-25
Deworm (Foal/Mini)	15
Fecal Exam	24
Clean Sheath	42
Sedation- Starts At	45
Coggins	37
Health Certificate (First 2 Horses)	48
Health Certificate Additional Horse	16

Prices of dewormers vary depending on what deworming strategy your horse requires.

A 10% discount will be applied to owners with 5 or more horses, and the farm call fee will be waived. Not applicable with any other discount.

****Manufacturer's Immunization Support Guarantee:** The vaccine company will pay for diagnostic & treatment costs up to \$5000 for your horse if he or she has been vaccinated by one of our doctors and becomes infected by West Nile, Influenza, Tetanus, Eastern Equine Encephalitis and/or Western Equine Encephalitis within 1 year of vaccination. This guarantee excludes Strangles & Rhino virus. **



**YOUR HORSE
NEEDS A
DENTAL EXAM
EVERY YEAR!**

Dentistry Pricing

We are offering our dentistry prices at \$180 plus sedatives. Sheath cleanings may be added for the discounted price of \$40.

\$180⁰⁰

We are continuing the Dental Health Maintenance Plan. Any horse that has dentistry performed annually will receive the discounted price of \$130 plus sedatives. This plan is ideal for horses that require more frequent dentistry.

\$130⁰⁰

To best service our clients, all of our doctors have received extensive training and continuing education opportunities in the field of equine dentistry.

The discounted price includes:

-  Sedation Examination
-  Full Mouth Speculum Examination
-  Dental Equilibration (performed with hand & power tools)

COMSTOCK EQUINE HOSPITAL

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