



# Newsletter

## Christmas 2011

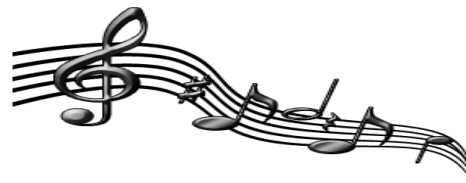
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*We would like to wish all our clients a very merry Christmas and a happy new year!*

### Staff News:

We would like to congratulate our equine nurse Sam on the safe arrival of her son Leo. Leo was born on the 28th November by caesarean section and weighed 8lb 15oz. Well done Sam!



On a musical note, Lindsay our receptionist opened the Holloway Road Christmas lights with a wonderful singing performance – congratulations Lindsay.



To add to the Tyrrells brood we would like to congratulate Jane Lawson Payne who is expecting her first baby in May 2012

### *Fancy a cuppa???*

For those who remember Chris our receptionist left in June to start a tea shop in Shepreth – 'Teacake' is now up and running, supplying delicious treats, especially to on the road vets! We wish her every success. Please pop in to see her if you are nearby.



### **Polite Notice .....**

Very occasionally we have some clients who get rather angry and abusive to the reception staff on the phone. Please be aware that all staff are doing their very best to get the practice to run as smoothly as possible, however due to the nature of the job, emergencies frequently arise and these must be treated as such. We realise that it can be extremely frustrating if pre booked appointments are shifted and we try to minimise these as much as possible, with apologies. However try to remember that there is a person on the end of the phone doing a difficult but essential job. Many Thanks

## Laminitis

In recent years the cold weather has brought an increased number of laminitis cases. The reasons behind this are not fully understood, however a few key points should be considered.

- Frosted grass will concentrate sugars called fructans in the tips of the blade. These sugars are known to induce laminitis in laminitic prone animals. Take care NOT to turn out onto paddocks until the frost has melted.
- Prolonged box-rest in icy weather will increase the risk of laminitis for two reasons: - Firstly – exercise speeds up the metabolic rate which combats equine metabolic syndrome, a common problem in laminitis prone horses and ponies. Secondly – feeding horses the same amount while on box rest will lead to weight gain and increased risk of laminitis.

## Equine Herpes Virus

The Equine Herpes virus can cause a number of clinical syndromes which vary greatly in appearance. The Virus is spread via the respiratory tract in infected respiratory secretions, much like the common cold in humans. The most commonly seen form of herpes virus is a respiratory disease causing mild signs including:-

Runny Nose    Coughing    Lethargy    Fever    Inappetence    Swollen Limbs

In pregnant mares herpes can be responsible for mid to late term abortions. A vaccine is available protecting against these forms of the disease; however for good protection all horses within a yard should be vaccinated to reduce the risk of exposure to the virus.

A less commonly seen syndrome is a neurological form of the disease which can present limb incoordination. This may progress to hind limb weakness or in severe cases, paralysis. Horses may also struggle to urinate, with symptoms progressing over 24-48 hours. Mildly affected horses usually make a full recovery, however in cases that become recumbent (unable to stand) the disease can be fatal.

A fourth syndrome has rarely been described which affects the tissue and lining of the lungs, causing fluid to accumulate in the chest cavity. This syndrome gives signs of severe lethargy and depression, then progressing to extreme weakness and collapse. This form has been described in the veterinary literature only a few times (less than 10 cases in total) and has been fatal in all cases.

The neurological syndrome is seen in isolated cases and occasionally occurs as 'outbreaks'. The vaccine is not licensed for either of these forms. Some horses exposed to the respiratory form will develop neurological signs of the disease.

We have recently had a case of the fourth, severe form of herpes in one horse owned by a client of the practice. Several in-contact horses have shown signs of the respiratory form, all have recovered without complications and the affected yard is back in full operation. We encourage vigilance in identifying and isolating potential cases of herpes, however we would like to emphasise that this is an extremely common virus which only **rarely** causes severe disease.