

Practice News

Towcester Veterinary Centre Equine Clinic is a Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons (RCVS) tier 2 accredited practice. This means that we are subject to rigorous inspections by the RCVS every 4 years and that you can be assured of the best standards of care for your horse. Should you wish to know more about this scheme, you can visit the RCVS website at www.findavet.org.uk or our own website at www.towcester-vets.co.uk.



We are pleased to welcome Alice Sheldon BVM&S Cert EP BSc MSc MRCVS to the practice from the beginning of February. If you recognise the name, it is because Alice is Mike's wife! Alice comes to us from Oakham Veterinary hospital where she has been part of the equine

team for the past 3 years. Having gained her certificate in Equine Practice in 2007, Alice has now enrolled for her Surgical Certificate and will be playing an active role in any surgical procedures at the clinic alongside our surgical consultant Cedric Chan BVSc CertES(Orth) DipIECVS MRCVS. Alice has her own horse – Koolie with whom she enjoys eventing, show jumping, team chasing and so on.

Client Evening

We will be having a client evening entitled "Equine Surgery – Insights and Anecdotes from an Olympic Vet." At Towcester Racecourse on Wednesday 27th February 2008 at 7pm. This will provide clients with a chance to meet our surgical consultant Cedric Chan BVSc CertES(Orth) DipIECVS MRCVS and the rest of the veterinary team. We intend to send further information nearer the time, but should you have any enquiries, please don't hesitate to contact the practice to book your place as numbers will be limited.

Introducing irap[®]



We are excited to announce our recent investment in an irap[®] processing system.

Irap[®] is a new treatment available to vets in the UK, although it has been used by

vets in continental Europe for five years or more with great success.

Irap[®] can be used in the treatment of lameness and pain associated with a variety of conditions affecting the musculo-skeletal system including joint-associated lameness, muscle, tendon and ligament injuries.

What is irap[®]?

When the body suffers an injury both 'good', anabolic (anti-inflammatory and regenerative) and 'bad', catabolic (inflammatory and degenerative) agents are produced at the site of injury.

Irap[®] uses the body's own protection mechanism to produce autologous conditioned serum (ACS) from your horse's own blood. ACS is essentially a 'soup' containing high levels of anabolic agents, but most importantly a very high concentration of inhibitors of the catabolic agents. The theory is that this 'soup' tips the scales in favour of the regenerative, anabolic processes.

Does it work?

One study² demonstrated a significant increase in IL-4, IL-10 and a massive increase in IL-1Ra (the 'good' agents) in whole human blood using this processing method.

Another, controlled study³ showed a significant improvement in the degree of lameness in horses treated with ACS compared with those that were not.

Data from the UK is limited, although it has been used successfully in the treatment of lameness associated with high-motion joints⁴ (coffin, fetlock and stifle) as well as sacro-iliac problems⁴.

Would my horse benefit from it?

Our consultant orthopaedic surgeon, Mr Cedric Chan, agrees that this is a useful treatment option if used appropriately. This biological therapy has the potential to induce regeneration or stop degeneration. Used appropriately ACS is a therapeutic alternative for joint-associated lameness.

Not every lameness will respond to irap[®]: it is not a panacea.

What does it involve?

A blood sample is taken from your horse and is incubated at the practice for 24 hours. The sample is then spun down and the serum (ACS) is harvested. It is then placed into separate dosing syringes which can be frozen for up to 6 months if required. The ACS is then injected into the affected joint on a weekly basis for 3 injections. A sufficient period of rest is then recommended post injections depending on the type of injury sustained.

If you have any questions concerning irap[®], please don't hesitate to contact the clinic.

1 Genetrix Ltd, West Sussex

2 Meijer, Reinecke et al: (Inflamm. Res. 52 (2003), pp. 404-407)

3 Frisbie, Kawcak and MacIlwraith: (AEEP Proceedings 51 (2005), pp. 374-375)

4 Personal communications

Artificial Insemination (AI) of mares in 2008 season

Towcester Equine Clinic is a British Equine Veterinary Association (BEVA) approved Artificial Insemination (AI) Centre. We work closely with the on site Crofter (Irish Draught) Stud scanning and treating visiting and resident mares on a daily basis throughout the season. We offer comprehensive A.I. packages to our clients and have experience in the use of fresh, chilled and frozen semen. Anybody interested in utilising this service should first speak to either Andy Hayes or Mike Sheldon on the usual clinic telephone number.

We recommend that all mares commencing an AI programme should have a preliminary examination carried out of their reproductive tract as early in the season as possible. This helps us recognise any problems that may hinder conception and establish whether any pre insemination treatments are required. Assuming all is well, a blood sample (to screen for EIA and EVA) and a clitoral swab (to screen for CEM organisms) will be taken from your mare. It is at this point that semen should be pre-ordered from your chosen stud/semen supplier. We will need their full contact details, and you will need to supply them with ours for semen delivery.

A manual vaginal examination and ultrasound scan of the uterus and ovaries enable us to establish how close to coming into season (oestrus) your mare is. A hormone injection is sometimes necessary to help bring her into season at the right time. Once your mare is in oestrus and has a large enough follicle, she will need to be stabled at the clinic. She will then be given a hormone implant to ensure that ovulation occurs within the following 48 hours. We will then contact the stud and order the semen. Regular examinations and scans are performed thereafter to follow the progress of the follicle to pinpoint the most appropriate time for insemination. This will vary depending on the type of semen (fresh, chilled or frozen) used. Following insemination the mare is scanned to ensure she has ovulated when expected and to look for the presence of post insemination uterine fluid. This is usually treated with antibiotics and hormone injections and the mare is usually discharged 24 hours later. Mares are usually stabled at the clinic for between 3 and 5 days.



We recommend that further scans are carried out at 14-16 days, 20 days and 30 days after ovulation to detect pregnancy.

The fee for the artificial insemination service is £265 (plus VAT) for fresh or chilled semen per cycle and £295 (plus VAT) for frozen semen per cycle. This fee excludes communal grass livery (£7 per day) or individual stabling (£12 per day) but does include:

- **Uterine (or endometrial) swabbing.**
- **Multiple examinations and scans as required to monitor ovarian development**
- **Hormone implant for inducing ovulation**
- **Insemination of the mare**
- **Post ovulation scan**
- **Routine post insemination treatment**
- **Pregnancy scans at days 14-16, 20 and 30**

What the fee does not cover:

- **A clitoral (CEM) swab taken prior to commencing the AI programme**
- **A prior visit and treatment to bring the mare into season should this be required**
- **Treatment for any severe uterine infection should this be detected.**

We will be holding a seminar evening on all aspects of A.I. at the clinic in February. Please phone reception or speak to Mike or Andy for details.