



THE GALLOPER



Issue Two

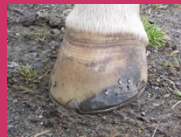
March 2008



From This...



To This...



In 11 Weeks!



Headshaking

Headshaking is an abnormal condition where a horse shakes its head, with such frequency and violence that it becomes difficult or dangerous to ride. A typical headshaker show signs at exercise, usually within 5 – 10 minutes. The abnormal head movement is usually vertical, but maybe horizontal or rotary. It looks like the horse has a fly on the end of its nose and is trying to shake it off. This is also accompanied by sneezing, snorting, nasal irritation and rubbing the nose. Severe cases show signs at rest as well as at exercise.

Headshaking: Diagnosis

Do the signs persist when the horse:

- Is lunged, with and without a bridle, and with and without a saddle?
- Is rode with different bits or a bitless bridle?
- Is rode with a different saddle or no saddle at all?
- Has a different rider?
- Is in a different environment?

If you think your horse is a “headshaker” please contact either Des or Kevin for further information.

Dress for the Occasion

A fleeing Taliban, desperate for water, was plodding through the Afghanistan desert when he saw something far off in the distance. Hoping to find water, he hurried toward the object, only to find a little old Israeli man at a small stand selling ties. The Taliban asked, “Do you have water?”

The Israeli replied, “I have no water. Would you like to buy a tie? They are only \$5.” The Taliban shouted, “Idiot! I do not need an overpriced tie. I need water! I should kill you, but I must find water first.”

“OK” said the old Israeli, “it does not matter that you do not want to buy a tie and that you hate me. I will show you that I am bigger than that, if you continue over that hill to the east for about two miles, you will find a lovely restaurant. It has all the ice cold water you need.”

Muttering, the Taliban staggered away over the hill. Several hours later he staggered back.

“Your brother won’t let me in without a tie.”

Grass Staggers

NEW!



EQUITAKTM
EXCEL
multidose

**NZ's first 3 in 1
 Liquid equine wormer**

Contains Abamectin,
 Praziquantel and
 Oxfendazole

Effective against
 Abamectin resistant
 Parascaris equorum

Contains 8 x 600kg
 horse doses



Register
 CVM

**\$170 for 8
 Treatments
 Compared to \$196
 For 8 tubes**

We usually see this condition in late summer and early autumn after rain breaks the summer drought. Ryegrass staggers is caused by a toxin that affects the nervous system, produced by a fungus present in certain types of ryegrass. Unfortunately horses, sheep, cattle and deer are adversely affected by the neurotoxin, although some individuals are far more sensitive to its effects than others.

The poorer the pasture quality i.e. the lower the ryegrass content, the lower the risk of staggers. Humid weather and overcast days increase the concentration of the fungus in the grass, and grazing pasture very short also increases the amount of toxin the horse will ingest.

Signs of Staggers in horses:

- Walking like a drunk
- Mild muscle tremors
- Swaying and un-coordination
- Lying down and unable to get up
- Spookiness or over-reaction to noise and movement

Prevention:

- Don't overgraze pastures during high risk periods (during humid, overcast weather in late summer/autumn)
- Encourage growth of other species e.g. clover and Lucerne, to reduce the horse's intake of ryegrass.
- Ensure sensitive horses graze longer pasture or lock them up and feed them hay.

Regrassing:

Complete prevention of ryegrass staggers requires regrassing with an alternative grass type, for most horses owners the prevention plan outlined above is more practical, but if regrassing is an option please talk to Des or Kevin or a local farm advisor.

Treatment:

Horses will detox naturally once they have stopped ingesting the toxin, remove affected horses from ryegrass pasture and keep them in a safe flat area free of obstacles, and feed them hay or hard feed. The symptoms should improve within a few days, and clear up completely within a couple weeks.

If a horse is badly affected, keeping them in a darkened box is the safest place. Affected horses should be kept as safe as possible until they recover completely. If you need to transport affected horses, please call us to arrange sedation to ensure a safe trip.

Equi-guard to an effective treatment for badly affected horses.