

## **Tetanus – Is Your Horse Protected?**

Unlike the other diseases that we can vaccinate your horse against, Tetanus is not a contagious disease, ie it does not spread between horses by contact. Instead, it is caused by a bacterium (*Clostridium tetani*) which is found in the soil and enters the body via wounds. Puncture wounds are particularly efficient at introducing tetanus, but often these wounds are small and not visible straight away. By the time you are aware your horse has been injured, the bacteria could have been present for several days, it causes disease by producing toxins that affect the nervous system.

ALL horses are at risk of tetanus, whether they mix with other horses or not.

## **What are the signs of Tetanus?**

Signs include:

- Muscle stiffness, resulting in a characteristic rocking horse stance, and an inability to eat, “lockjaw”.
- Difficulty moving and eating
- Prominence of the 3rd eyelid
- Seizures
- Horses with tetanus become seriously ill very quickly.

## **Can Tetanus be Treated?**

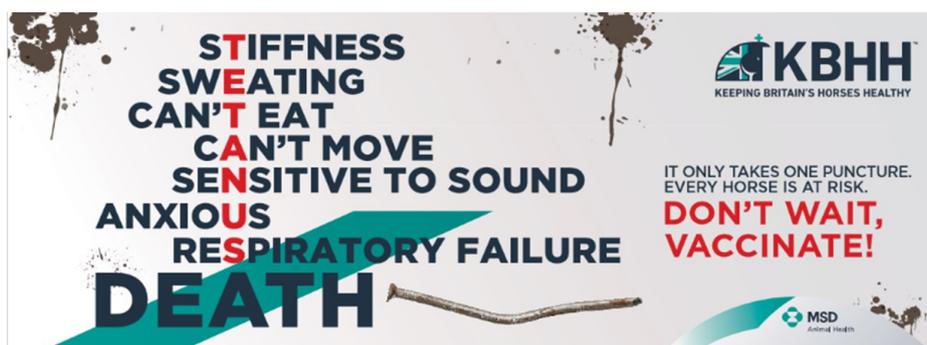
Treatment can be attempted using tetanus antitoxin, penicillin and muscle relaxants. There is also a massive amount of supportive care as affected horses cannot feed unassisted.

Treatment is expensive and labour intensive and in the majority of tetanus cases affected horses are euthanased on welfare grounds.

## **How Do I Prevent My Horse Getting Tetanus?**

Vaccination against tetanus is straightforward, inexpensive and highly effective. After an initial course of two vaccinations 6 weeks apart, and then a booster 12 months later, ongoing vaccinations are every two years.

This vaccination gives you peace of mind that even if your horse has a small wound that goes un-noticed he will be protected against tetanus.



**STIFFNESS  
SWEATING  
CAN'T EAT  
CAN'T MOVE  
SENSITIVE TO SOUND  
ANXIOUS  
RESPIRATORY FAILURE  
DEATH**

**KBHH**  
KEEPING BRITAIN'S HORSES HEALTHY

IT ONLY TAKES ONE PUNCTURE.  
EVERY HORSE IS AT RISK.  
**DON'T WAIT,  
VACCINATE!**

**MSD**  
Animal Health

**Our recommendation is that EVERY horse should be vaccinated for tetanus.**

## Horse Health Week

We will be supporting horse health week again in 2016. Please check out our website and facebook page for daily handy horse health care tips during Horse Health Week.

Throughout the week we will be raising awareness of the benefits of preventative healthcare, putting forward all the small things horse and yard owners can do to make a big difference to the health of our nation's horses.



### Could Your Horse Have Cushings Disease?

Lethargic? Pot Belly? Unusual fat pads, especially above the eyes? Drinking/urinating more? Not fully shedding winter coat? Laminitis?

If your horse is showing some or all of these symptoms then he could be suffering from equine cushings disease. This common hormonal disease affects over 20% of horses above the age of 15. In PPID the pituitary gland at the base of the brain becomes dysregulated and starts to produce too many hormones. This excess of hormones affects the horse's metabolism, leading to a wide range of possible symptoms as detailed above.



### How is Cushings Disease diagnosed?

For the majority of horses, PPID can be diagnosed by taking a simple blood test.

**Special offer:** Until the end of November 2016, our practice is offering subsidised blood sampling to our clients for PPID courtesy of Boehringer Ingelheim. If you are suspicious that your horse may be suffering from equine cushings disease, or if he is a teenager or older and you are just curious about his PPID status then please ask us to check him. **Horses that are already receiving medication for their Cushings disease are not eligible for this offer.**



Please contact the surgery for more details or visit [www.talkaboutlaminitis.co.uk](http://www.talkaboutlaminitis.co.uk) to find out more about PPID and to generate your voucher code.

### Can Cushings Disease be treated?

Yes, a tablet medication is available that you administer daily. This treatment helps the pituitary gland to regulate the amount of hormones that it produces, so that hormone levels return to normal levels.

This treatment is a lifelong treatment, and regular monitoring is required to ensure good hormonal control is maintained.

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