

# STUD TO STABLE

Perth Equine Hospital Newsletter  
Summer 2022



Draw in a deep breath of this wonderfully warm air and raise your faces towards the radiant sun. How good is it? It is hard to believe that the 2022 calendar year is nearly over and Christmas and New year upon us!

During the summer, overheating presents serious health risks to horses, and it can occur because of several factors including hot weather and humidity, poor ventilation, prolonged sun exposure, transport, excessive work, obesity, and a lack of fitness. Find out ways to deal with heat stress on the page overleaf.

You would have probably noticed that we have been busier lately as we deal with an increase in demand. This necessitates careful prioritisation of horse medical needs, with ill or urgent cases being attended to first and non-urgent procedures, consultations or medication requests being completed later. We ask that you please pack your patience, empathy and understanding so we can continue to offer your horse and many others, the benefits of experienced and kind medical care.

Summer is a time for getting out and amongst it, so we sincerely wish all our clients and friends a peaceful, hopeful, relaxing, and safe summer ahead.

Paul O'Callaghan & the PEH Team



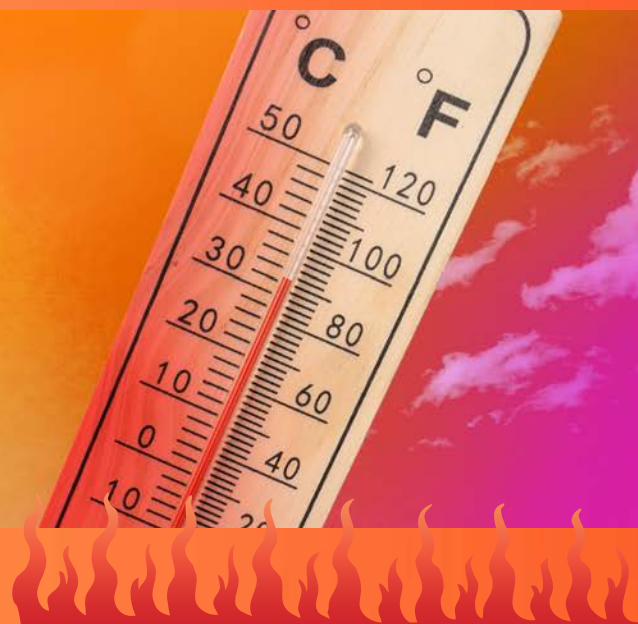


## HEAT STRESS!

Heat stress occurs when the body cannot get rid of excess heat. Horses normally cool their bodies through processes known as radiation, evaporation, and convection. These processes allow horses to dissipate heat from the core of their bodies to the outer surfaces to be removed. In hot, humid conditions these normal cooling mechanisms are often ineffective at removing heat efficiently, rendering the horse at risk of suffering from heat stress.

### Contributing factors towards heat stress in horses:

- High ambient temperatures
- High humidity
- Poor conditioning
- Lack of fitness
- Lack of access to water
- Travelling long distances
- Poorly ventilated spaces
- Inappropriate rugs
- Obesity



### Signs of heat stress in horses:

1. Rapid shallow breathing (panting), or sometimes mouth breathing
2. Flared nostrils. Staggering, apparently uncontrollable gait
3. Very high body temperature (skin will be hot to touch)
4. Rectal temperature above 38.5 C
5. Profuse sweating or sweating much less than expected to
6. Agitated and distressed appearance
7. Collapse (in severe cases)

If a horse becomes overheated, it is important to use aggressive cooling methods to reduce the horse's temperature. You should immediately:

1. Stop riding the horse, place him in the shade and call a veterinarian, as the situation may quickly become an emergency.
2. Starting with the feet and legs, gradually wet the horse's entire body, including the head, with cool water continuously. It may take 15 minutes before you see any effect.
3. If there is no breeze, provide air movement with a fan, if possible.
4. Provide clean, cool fresh drinking water, allowing the horse a few swallows of cool water every few minutes.
5. It is recommended that the horse be walked for short periods until it has cooled down to prevent muscle spasms.

THE SUMMER HEAT IS HERE  
AND IT'S TIME TO

# Slip, Slop, Slap!



As you slather on the sunscreen this summer, don't forget that your horse can get sunburnt, too, particularly if they have pink skin, which has less protective pigment (melanin). Sunburn recovery can take months, so taking proactive steps to keep your equine friend protected this summer is in everyone's best interests! Here's how to shield your horse from the sun's ultraviolet radiation:

- Fly masks block UV light and some fly masks are available with extensions that cover sensitive portions of the nose and muzzle. During Summer, flies and other biting insects can be irritating to your horse, so a fly mask will provide a layer of comfort, whilst helping prevent sunburn too.
- Sunscreen and zinc should be applied regularly onto your horse's sensitive pink skin, particularly if they're white or grey. Around the nostrils is a common area for sunburn, so apply generously to this area. Our favourite product for protecting our horses from sunburn is Filta-Bac. It is a dual action sun block offering protection from the UV rays as well as being anti-bacterial and anti-septic. It protects sensitive skin from sun damage and can be used to treat minor skin wounds as it is also an effective wound protectant cream.
- Keeping a horse entirely out of the sun is impractical, but you do need to ensure that they have access to shade. Trees provide the coolest shade to your horse, so try to keep them paddocked in a pasture with plenty of tree cover.
- If your horse is prone to sunburn, you may want to keep horses stabled during peak daylight hours.

If your horse does get sunburnt, treat it as you would your own: Keep the area clean and protected from further sun exposure. If the skin develops blisters, scabs, bumps or other anomalies, something other than sunburn may be at work. One possibility is photosensitivity, a complex chemical reaction to sunlight that may indicate liver disease; another is squamous cell carcinoma, sun-related cancerous growths usually seen on or near the eyelids.

**If anything about your horse's sunburn looks unusual,  
call us!**





# BREAKING NEWS

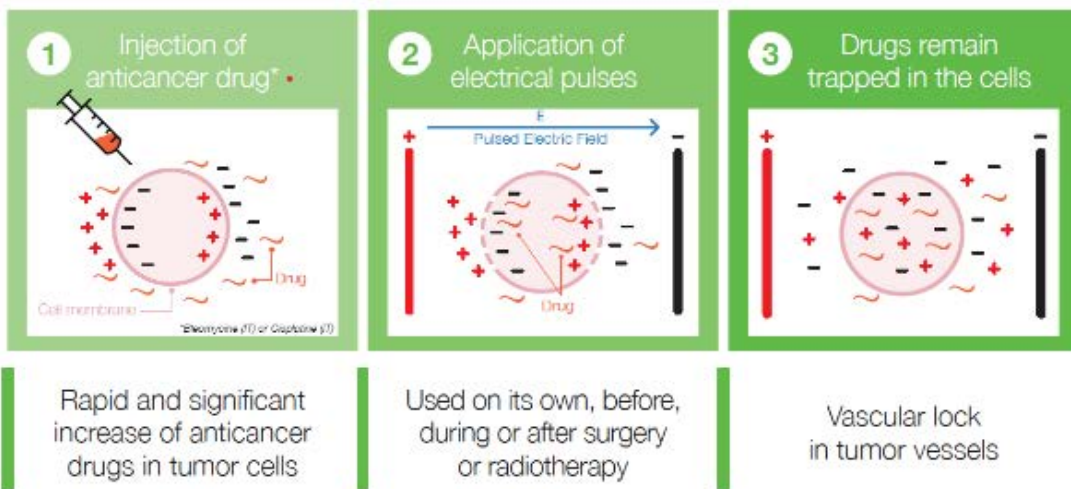


## Electrochemotherapy is now available at PEH!

Electrochemotherapy is the combined use of chemotherapeutic drugs and high-voltage electric pulses, to treat cutaneous tumours such as sarcoids, melanomas and squamous cell carcinomas.



### Principles of electrochemotherapy



The use of electrochemotherapy has improved reported success rates than chemotherapy alone and is particularly beneficial for difficult to treat tumours such as sarcoids.

- 99.5% no-recurrence rate after 4 years on equine sarcoid (Tamzali, 2011).
- 92.3% complete response was obtained on equine sarcoid, 60 months after treatment (Tozon, 2016).

The following cases shared with us by Leroy Biotech (and shown here with permission) show the progression of a severe periocular sarcoid (above) and a squamous cell carcinoma (below) after ECT treatments.

Please contact the clinic if you want to know more about ECT or if you have any concerns about growths or tumours on your horse's skin.



Day 0. Before 1<sup>st</sup> session



Day 7. 7 days after 1<sup>st</sup> session



Day 21. 7 days after 2<sup>nd</sup> session



Day 180. After 3<sup>rd</sup> session



Day 0. Before 1<sup>st</sup> session



Day 7. 7 days after 1<sup>st</sup> session



Day 28. Before 3<sup>rd</sup> session



Day 180. After 3<sup>rd</sup> session



# FLIES & MOSQUITOES!



Summer should be fun yet flies and mosquitoes can be a real nuisance, leading to irritable horses and putting them at risk of injury. Monitoring your horse for signs of bites is important. Patches of broken hair, damaged skin, thickened skin, and a crusty mane, all caused by excessive rubbing due to the itchiness of bites, are signs to look for. Often horses will rub areas raw from the annoyance, and then we are left treating secondary skin infections, so early detection and mitigation of flies and mosquitoes is recommended.

To ensure your horse stays comfortable this summer, follow these simple solutions to limit exposure:

1. Have a good manure management program to reduce insect breeding habitat (for flies).
2. Putting horses in a stall with a fan (to produce strong air current) can be helpful.
3. Fly masks are a great way of keeping flies away from your horse's eyes and out of their ears.
4. Avoid standing/stagnant water where possible as these are breeding grounds for mosquitoes.
5. Feed your horse supplements containing omega-3 fatty acids (which lessen inflammatory response and potentially itchiness).
6. Apply fly and mosquito repellent to your horse's body. Apply and re-apply repellents in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.
7. Develop a comprehensive insect control plan that targets the environment (fly and mosquito traps).
8. Biting midges are active from dusk until dawn, so keeping the horse in a stable at these times may reduce exposure to bites.
9. Line your horses stable with bug netting, especially if they are predisposed to insect hypersensitivity.

Most horses with insect bite hypersensitivity can be managed with insect repellents, strategic turnout, dietary supplementation of omega-3 fatty acids, and symptomatic anti-inflammatory medication. Initial treatment of insect bite hypersensitivity is aimed at breaking the cycle of itching and/or hives.

## Take home message

Itching in horses can be caused by many different problems that can be difficult to identify, diagnose, and manage. Always work with your veterinarian to get the correct diagnosis and the latest management advice. Currently, the most effective treatment for insect bite hypersensitivity is to prevent insect bites. If you arm yourself with the appropriate weapons this summer, flies and insects won't be too much of a drama.

What's your insect control plan? Now is the time to start fighting flies and other critters.





# PREPARE YOUR HORSE SURVIVAL PLAN NOW, PRIOR TO SUMMER!

## 1

### DO YOUR RESEARCH-DOWNLOAD THE APP

My Bushfire Plan is a bushfire preparedness tool, providing you with one place to prepare, store, print, share and update your bushfire plan anytime, from any device. **Download it TODAY!**

## 2

### PREPARE YOUR HOME & PROPERTY

Coordinate with your family on your protocol during an emergency. Keep important numbers on hand.

## 3

### PACK AN EMERGENCY KIT

It is also important to have a horse emergency survival kit on hand. Your kit should have items that might help your horse survive a bush fire or other natural disaster. Keep the kit in an easy to access place and check it regularly to replace out of date materials. It is a good idea to label the kit with the date you packed it and the next date you want to check it.

## 4

### STAY INFORMED

We strongly encourage horse owners to make themselves aware of

- 7-day fire rating forecasts
- High winds forecast
- Total fire bans
- Fire updates



**Fire or life threatening emergencies: 000**  
**Emergency Information: 13 3337**  
**SES Emergency Assistance: 132 500**



# HOSPITAL NOTICES



## Medication repeats

If your horse is on long-term medication, it is generally advisable to always have a four-week supply on hand. If you are needing a repeat prescription, please ring ahead so we can authorise and prepare your medication and have it ready.

## Saturday service reminder

As we continue to be placed under increasing pressures surrounding staff, workflow, and high demand, we remind clients that we no longer provide a Saturday routine service. From 5pm Friday emergency and after-hours rules and pricing applies.

We understand and apologise for inconveniences caused by this change in availability, and will continue to work with our clients to support evolving needs.

## Need horse advice?

To ensure you receive the greatest care and attention, we recommend that consultations should be scheduled to field questions and requests for advice. Treatment advice and second opinions can be incredibly complex, and any advice sought, no matter how big or small, needs to be analysed thoroughly. This is to ensure advice given is not only the best advice possible, but that the advice is accurate.

**\*\*We remind clients that phone calls from 5pm Fridays and over the weekend are for emergency only\*\***

## Accounts

Email services such as Gmail, Outlook and Yahoo block emails to protect you from unwanted or malicious emails. We are finding an ever-increasing number of accounts not paid, with clients finding our requests for payment in their spam or trash folders.

To ensure you receive your accounts straight into your inbox, and that our emails are not lost, add our email address to your email contacts. When you whitelist us, you are confirming that you know, and trust our email source. It's that simple!

## Syndicates

Accounts raised for the provision of services that are split between syndicate members or multiple owners attract an administration fee. It is the responsibility of the client to inform us of any changes to horse ownership, syndicate or any changes to their address, postal address or contact details.

Any changes to ownership, syndicate details that are not notified in the month following the provision of service/s or the supply of goods that results in us having to reverse and re-invoice those service/s or goods will result in a service fee of \$75.00 being added to their account.