

The Equine Clinic at OakenCroft

Winter Newsletter 2015

Year in Review

The Equine Clinic at OakenCroft hopes the last year has been as fulfilling for you as it has for us! We hosted a variety of events, including our client education meeting, a youth day, a low cost castration clinic, and a farrier clinic. Our all day client education meeting is offered every other year so we look forward to seeing you all again in 2016! Youth day is scheduled every Fall to help encourage the next generation's interest in horses continue. We offer a variety of short classes aimed at a younger age group for a fun but educational day. Our low cost castration clinic is offered in the Fall to help those who otherwise could not afford to have the procedure performed. Our hope is that by providing this service we can help make better geldings in happy homes than unhappy stallions with no breeding purpose. Our application is available online starting August 1st. We also offer a farrier clinic in October to help promote a good working relationship between veterinarians and farriers. Everyone needs continuing education to stay abreast of the latest techniques and treatments available! These are just a few of the events we participate in to help educate and assist the equine community. We plan on continuing to host these events to promote the welfare of the horse and the education of the owner. If there are any topics or concerns you would like to see addressed in future meetings or events please email our office with suggestions!



While we said good bye to one of our long standing veterinarians this year, we are happy to announce the arrival of Dr. Calsey Grant as a permanent fixture to our staff. Many of you may already be familiar with her as she was our intern last year. She completed her year at OakenCroft with flying colors AND has also graduated from a chiropractic course. Dr. Grant joins our duo of chiropractors (Drs. Penno and McDonald) with the same competence and excitement. Dr. Grant is pleased to offer lameness and chiropractic skills to the western and southern portions of our practice, as well as addressing any general health and wellness concerns. Please contact the office today to schedule your exam with our newest chiropractor!

Equine Metabolic Syndrome

Equine Metabolic Syndrome is a disease of many names. In the past it has been called Hypothyroidism, Omental Cushings, Peripheral Cushings, and insulin resistance. It is becoming a much more prominent problem in equids due to the caloric rich diets and sedentary life styles of our horses today. While many of the contributing genetic factors are yet to be determined, we do know

that some breeds are more likely to develop this disease than others. These horses typically have cresty necks, fatty deposits over their bodies, laminitic issues, and fertility issues in broodmares. Testing for Equine Metabolic Syndrome is multi-



faceted and can sometimes be frustrating to attach a "number" to, so that it makes sense. Some medical treatments are available, but much of the ability to control the disease lies with diet and exercise. Much research has been done in recent years to develop "safe starch" grains that most feed companies promote at

length today. For more information on this topic, please attend our client education series starting in February. Check our website for locations near you!

Boarding at ECO

Many are not aware of our boarding services at The Equine Clinic at OakenCroft. We have a 160 acre facility with 60 stalls. We offer a variety of services depending on the needs of you and your horse. Two veterinarians are in permanent residence on the property to ensure observation even when the clinic itself is closed. We have the ability to board your broodmare or stallion for quick and easy access to breeding services with Dr. Jones. We have rehabilitation facilities for those horses needing quiet and limited turnout to recover from either injuries or surgeries.



Our retirement program can accommodate both the older horse who needs rough board and those who would prefer stall board with daily turnout. Our barn offers a place to store all your horse's apparel and grooming tools for those selecting stall board. Rough board provides 24 hour turnout with large open sheds for shelter in the summer and winter. For those electing permanent board at ECO, we include your yearly routine work in the price of board! Our various fields and paddocks have grass from May to October to ensure a high quality life to those who have given us so much.

Maybe your are simply looking to go on vacation but are having a difficult time finding reliable care for your horse while you are gone. We are happy to provide short term boarding services to help ensure your peace of mind while you vacation. Please call our office for pricing today!

Anaplasmosis: The "Other" Tick Borne Disease

Anaplasmosis (also known as Equine Granulocytic Ehrlichiosis) is a tick borne disease caused by the bacteria *Anaplasma phagocytophilum*. The disease tends to occur in late fall, winter and spring. The time from when a horse is bitten by a tick to the time clinical signs are seen (the incubation period) can vary from 1 day to almost a month.



Presenting clinical signs are typically a sudden onset of a fever, which can often be very high (102-106). The fever tends to be highest during the first 1-3 days and it can persist for over a week if no treatment is pursued. The horse may also be depressed, have a lack of appetite, have swollen legs, generalized weakness, or even a reluctance to walk. These

signs have been shown to vary with the age of the infected horse. Younger horses tend to have more subtle signs while older horses can show more severe issues.

When treating for the disease your vet will often take a blood sample for a CBC (complete blood count). The disease will typically show some characteristic changes on this test such as a low white blood cell count (leukopenia), low red blood cells (anemia), and low platelets (thrombocytopenia). The organism lives inside cells, especially those called neutrophils, which can be seen under a microscope. An Anaplasma-specific blood test (PCR) can also provide a positive or negative result. As the disease is the result of a tick bite, and those ticks may carry Lyme disease as well, it may be recommended to test for both diseases.

Treatment is with the Tetracycline class of antibiotics. Typically oxytetracycline will be given IV initially. Then, based off blood work changes and clinical response, it may be repeated in subsequent days. Oral administration of doxycycline may then be administered for 7-14 days. Fever and other signs usually resolve quickly within 24-48 hours of treatment. Often a response to treatment confirms the presumptive diagnosis.

While the disease is self-limiting, meaning it can resolve in a few weeks without any treatment, signs tend to be more severe and can persist longer. Secondary complications from fever can occur as well such as colic. A previously existing infection can also be made worse. Relapses 3 weeks after the initial infection have also been reported, even if treatment was instituted.

The disease is usually not fatal and complications are rare if treatment is prompt. When diagnosed early and treated appropriately, the prognosis for a full return to health is excellent.

Tick prevention is the key to disease control as there is no vaccine for Anaplasmosis. Check your horses daily. Ticks tend to like less haired, warm areas such as the armpit, groin and under the jaw. Ticks must typically be attached for 24 hours in order to transmit their infection. Keep long

grasses and shrubbery trimmed and out of your pasture. Try to limit exposure to tick carriers such as barn rodents (mice, chipmunks, voles) and deer. Remember to keep using your fly and tick spray (one that contains permethrins) through the winter. Even though the flies are gone the ticks are not. Other topical products such as Equispot or even some canine products may be helpful. Guinea hens (if you can stand the noise) and chickens are also great natural tick predators.

Biosecurity: Why Do We Care?

Biosecurity by definition is security from exposure to harmful biological agents; *also*: measures taken to ensure this security. Did you know that a horse that looks completely healthy can be shedding the bacteria that causes Strangles? Or the viruses that cause influenza or rhinopneumonitis? Or countless other diseases? So what can you do about it... Biosecurity! When you get a new horse in the barn keep them isolated for at least 2 weeks. This means in a separate barn or down at the end of the barn. Turnout away from other horses with no nose to nose contact is essential! Shared fence lines mean shared germs.



Yes it's a pain, but how much of a pain is every horse in your barn having a fever and a snotty nose? Do you put your hose into water buckets to fill them? You are taking nasal discharge directly from one horse to the next. Use buckets to add water instead of a hose and don't let horses drink from your filling buckets. At the very least keep your hose out of the buckets. At horse shows do you share buckets, tack, or hay nets? Do you let your horses touch noses with other horses? Do you touch and pet other horses then go snuggle your own? Fomite by definition is an object (as in a dish or an article of clothing) that may be contaminated with infectious organisms and serve in their transmission. You don't want to be a fomite. You don't want your things to be a fomite.

If you compare biosecurity on the average horse farm to the average dairy farm we are in the dark ages. Swine and poultry farms are even stricter. Did you know that you have to take a shower to get into a swine farm if you have any recent exposure to pigs? Now that level of biosecurity is not practical for horse farms, but we can all do better, and save ourselves some stress, down time and money.

Mark Your Calendars!

This year we are offering another exciting line-up of events to be hosted at our clinic:

- Client Education Clinics – **See our website for the county and date nearest you**
- Youth Day – **Saturday, September 19, 2015**
- The Castration Project – **Saturday, October 3, 2015** (Applications open August 1st)

Our events last year were such a great success we want to keep it going in 2015! Check our website frequently for the most up-to-date details on each event. The veterinarians and staff at ECO really look forward to seeing our clients at these occasions. Youth, 4H, Pony Club, and rescue groups are offered special pricing. We ask that you please register beforehand so we can plan attendance and refreshments accordingly. You may do so by calling the clinic at **518-767-2906** or through email at equineclinic@oakencroft.org.

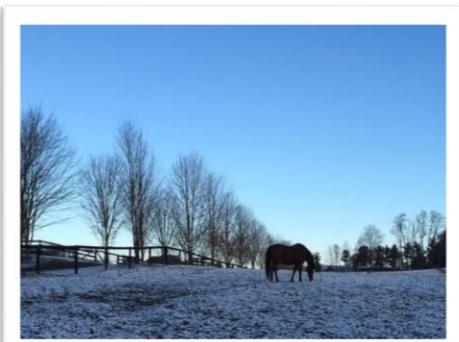
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880 Bridge Street
Ravena, NY 12143
518-767-2906
518-767-3503 (Fax)
<http://oakencroft.org>



Visit us on the web at <http://oakencroft.org> for upcoming events, current information, directions, and our convenient online pharmacy.

Please update ECO with your email address for prompt and paperless communication, updates, and coupons!



Did you know we have a new online pharmacy?

As an effort to improve client satisfaction, we are changing our online pharmacy effective February 1, 2015. All active clients will have an account automatically set up through Vets First Choice. If we have your email address on file, then you will be getting a welcome email with a link to your personal account. If you do not have an email address on file, our customer service team will happily help you in accessing your account. Visit our website for the direct link. We would love to hear what you think! Send any feedback to our office at equineclinic@oakencroft.org.