



SPAVIN

Spavin is a common problem in horses affecting the hocks. There are two types of spavin: bog spavin and bone spavin. Read on below to find out the differences between these similar sounding conditions.

What is Bog Spavin?

Bog spavin is the common name given to distension of the tarso-cruel joint with synovial fluid (joint fluid). This leads to swelling over the front and sides of the hock. It is mainly a cosmetic problem and the cause is unknown.

It is usually found in young horses and can present with similar features to OCD, so x-rays of the hock should be taken to differentiate the conditions.

Horses with bog spavin do not normally show any signs of lameness and there is no heat or pain on palpation. The fluid can be moved from side to

side by putting pressure on the swelling, showing its position within the joint capsule.

How is Bog Spavin Treated?

Treatment is not necessary as the condition does not affect the function of the hock or cause the horse any pain. If a cosmetic resolution is required, the synovial fluid can be drained and the joint medicated to try to decrease secretion of synovial fluid. This treatment is not 100% curative and fluid will often return after the procedure.

What is Bone Spavin?



Hock x-ray showing bone spavin

Bone spavin is osteoarthritis of the hock, most commonly affecting the tarso-metatarsal joint. However, all joints of the hock can be affected. It is the most common cause of chronic hindlimb lameness in the horse. All breeds of horses can be affected, the condition is progressive and most commonly seen in older horses.



Another hock x-ray showing bone spavin

Clinical signs can include poor performance, dragging of hindlimb toes, limited hock flexion and lameness on flexion testing. Radiographs are required to show the degree of bony change within the hock joints and to fully assess the condition.

How is Bone Spavin Treated?

Due to the progressive nature of bone spavin the joint(s) affected will eventually fuse. Once they have fused, the lameness will no longer be present, as the joint will be pain free. Before this, treatment involves medication of the joints with long-acting steroids to alleviate pain and inflammation. Another drug commonly used is Tildren[®], a drug belonging to the class of bisphosphonates, which inhibit bone breakdown and remodelling. Arthrodesis, (the process where the joints are fused surgically), can be used for cases that do not respond well to joint medication and other medical treatment.

If you are concerned that your horse may be suffering from one of the conditions above, please contact the clinic to discuss.

INTELLIGENT WORMING

How effective is your worming plan? With an increase in worm resistance to worming drugs and a move away from using unnecessary and expensive worming treatments in our

equine friends, isn't it time you tailored your worming plan to your individual horse? We are now doing in house worm egg counts for £10 each + VAT (Discounts available for large groups of horses). We then use the results to formulate an individual worming plan for your horse to make sure they are fully treated, but not over treated.

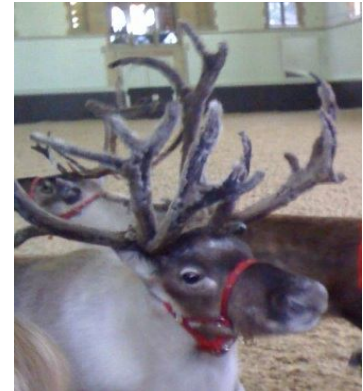
NEW TEAM MEMBER



Liz Richardson MRCVS qualified from the Royal Veterinary College this year and, after a period of time locuming, has joined us to work as a full time vet at Hall Place. She will be sharing her time between equine and small animal work. As a keen rider and polo player herself, she will be at home on the yards, but also enjoys treating

the smaller patients in the surgery.

FESTIVE GREETINGS



We would like to take this opportunity to wish all our clients good cheer for the Christmas season and health and prosperity for the coming New Year.

From Tony, Marc, Alicia, Liz and all at Hall Place Veterinary Centre.

EMAIL ADDRESSES

Please phone the surgery or provide us with your email address (and any other updates to your details e.g. mobile phone number) next time we visit. Then we will be able to send you our newsletters and any offers relevant to you and your horse without wasting paper and trees!