



Dipping navels.....continued.

From last newsletter we were asked why use 7% Tincture of Iodine for dipping navels rather than spraying plain iodine & why this practice reduces the risk of joint ill.

A navel cord is a direct route straight into a calf's bloodstream & from there to joints, eyes & brains. We want it to stop letting bugs in as soon as possible. This is done by getting calves out of the mud and disinfecting & drying the cord as soon as possible.

A navel is considered dry when the full length of the cord is inflexible & shrivelled. The alcohol in the solution (the "tincture") will help penetrate & dry out the cord. Diluted iodine teat dip contains emollient that will prevent drying.

Dip the navel as soon as possible. Check the navel area at least once daily for the first week until the navel cord dries; if necessary re-dip the navel.

Dip the full length of the cord in the solution, right up to the calf's belly.

Change the dipping solution after two days. Both iodine & alcohol evaporate.

A spray won't cover the full cord area or travel up the openings of the blood vessels as well as a dipped product will.

We hope this makes it a bit clearer.

Not all Electrolytes were created equal - the top three things to keep in mind when feeding electrolytes to a scouring calf?

1. Overdiagnosis: When it comes to young calves fed milk or milk powder, loose manure is a common occurrence. When fully feeding a calf, manure may appear loose but the calf may not be sick. If they are still suckling well, a feed of electrolytes in the middle of the day is all they need. Make sure it has been a couple of hours since the milk feed & a couple of hours before the next. Determine if the calf is showing other signs of illness or if loose manure is simply because the calf is consuming a high level of nutrition in a liquid diet.

2. Management: Proper management & care are essential when feeding electrolytes. During treatment, calves should continue to be fed milk or milk replacer in addition to electrolytes. Without milk they do not have enough energy.

Electrolytes should be mixed with quality water & should never be mixed into milk or milk powder. Equipment in contact with electrolytes or the calf should be properly cleaned & sanitised.

3. Product: With a multitude of electrolytes on the market, it can be difficult to choose the best product for your calves. To get the most effective treatment, electrolytes should contain an alkalizing agent to reduce acidosis, glycine to aid absorption, dextrose for energy, malic acid to reduce D-lactic acidosis & zinc to aid in gut healing.

Generally you get what you pay for. Dexolyte is cheap because it contains very little compared to Revive or Diarrest.



Laminitis, it's not just ponies!

It's that time of year again. NIWA just predicted a hot dry summer. Which sounds lovely given we are slipping around in mud. Every year I get a case of laminitis in the young, fit race or sport horse.

Generally this presents as a very acute lameness after a front foot stone bruise or abscess. This is due to the mechanical forces operating on the opposite foot. In the larger horse (greater than 400kg) the pedal bone doesn't necessarily rotate but normally sinks through the sole. I've been called to "colic" that are laminitis episodes and all sorts of other preconceptions. The horse will have its back legs under its body.

Any disease process can predispose a horse to laminitis. The common one is Cushings or PPID, but a septic focus, or enterotoxaemia as caused by retained fetal membranes or a good case of diarrhea will do the same thing by initiating a vasculitis (inflammation in the blood vessels)

If your horse has a non weight bearing lameness in a fore limb, it is absolutely necessary to watch the opposite limb for signs of stress. Check the pulse twice daily. Use anti inflammatory agents for the disease process. They help pain too. And more weight bearing on the initially affected limb helps.

When suspicious of laminitis, or any condition that may predispose to it basic ice or cold therapy is an absolute cornerstone. Always have a truck inner tube at hand. Tie off one end and fill with cold water and ice and place over the distal limb. This is very effective at helping calm the vasculitis and inflammatory mediators. A good cold muddy yard is not a bad thing as this also supports the sole.

The take home message is do not be complacent in a lameness that lasts for more than a day. Be pro active.

Breeding Readiness

Make sure your mare is under lights if wanting to breed early. Use equilume or similar if lights are not an option.

Ensure your mare is well wormed and on a good plane of nutrition. This will help with conception rates. Don't suddenly drag her in and cut the feet back. Pain will adversely affect conception rates. For foaling. Again check body condition, dates etc. make sure you have a foaling facility ready if there is a live goal guarantee.

Again. I would love some feedback, and any suggestions about where you as our valued clients would like information. Just let us know, and for individual queries just give me a ring.

Here is to a balmy Spring .

All the best from Paul and myself

