

What to expect when your mare foals:

With spring arriving and the weather hopefully improving a number of you will be expecting foals in the next few months. Whether its your first foal or a regular event its good to have a plan of what to expect.

Important things to do in the last few weeks.

If you are planning to move the mare it's a good idea to do this at least two weeks before she foals. The foaling box should be big enough to allow the mare to lie down and still have space for the foal to move around. A freshly laid deep straw bed is the ideal and the stable should be within easy access to allow for regular checks. Its also important to remember that most mares foal at night so good quality lighting won't go unused. It is also important to remember that the mare will need to have her **tetanus immunity boosted in the last 4 weeks** of pregnancy in order to give her foal immunity.



What to look out for in the last few weeks.

At about two weeks pre foaling the mare's udder will start to fill with milk. The muscles of the mare's vulva will start to relax and may be noticeably different in the days prior to foaling. Some mares will leak milk for a few days pre foaling. This may start as a thin straw coloured fluid and progressively become whiter. If this continues to run and changes to a yellow/orange then it may be that the mare is losing good quality colostrum which needs to be collected and stored for when the foal arrives. Every mare is unique and it is important to remember that these are only guidelines.

Stages of foaling

Stage 1

Will last between 30 minutes and 4 hours. Your mare may begin to show signs similar to colic, these may include lying down, sweating, flank watching and pawing the ground. This will be a sign that uterine contractions are increasing and the foal is rotating and moving into the pelvic canal. If possible during this stage it is a good ideal to clean your mare's perineum with warm water and wrap the tail in a tail bandage. At the end of stage 1 of labour the chorioallantoic membranes will rupture and clear allantoic fluid will be released.

Stage 2

At this stage the foal will move into the birth canal and uterine contractions will intensify. The mare will often lie down at this point but some may be more restless. The first thing you will see will be a grey/white sac protruding from the vulva (this is the amnion). If you see a red bag protruding from the mare's vulva instead of a grey/white sac then you must call the practice immediately. A red sac indicates that the inner sac has ruptured and the foal will have lost its oxygen supply, in this situation you must rupture the red sac using your hands or a clean blunt object. Following the amnion the foal should be delivered with one foot in front of the other followed by the head. Once the foal's hips have passed through the mare's pelvis it is common for the mare to rest for 15 minutes before delivering the full foal, as long as the amnion has ruptured the foal will be able to breath normally. Once the foal is delivered, leave the umbilical chord to rupture naturally. Cutting the cord prematurely can lead to fatal bleeding for the foal. If stage 2 of foaling has been going on for more than 30 minutes then call immediately as the foal is in significant danger. After foaling the foal should stand within one hour and be nursing the mare within 2 hours.

Stage 3

Will take place 30 minutes to 3 hours post foaling. The mare will expel the placenta and foetal membranes. It is best to keep the placenta so it can be checked by one of our vets. If the mare has not passed her placenta by 3 hours post foaling then she will need to be seen by us.

Following foaling it is best to have the mare and foal checked over by one of the vets. If at any point in the run up or during foaling you have a concern then please contact us, foals can quickly deaerate so early intervention is essential.

Equine Influenza and Tetanus protocol

Horses require an initial course of three injections, the second injection should be 21-92 days after the first. The third injection should be 150 –215 days later. Thereafter they require annual injections at up to 365 day intervals. For horses competing under FEI rules they must be vaccinated within 6 months and 21 days of the competition. Also to remember that horses cannot compete until they have had their second vaccination and are not allowed to compete within 7 days of being vaccinated. Tetanus vaccination is essential as Tetanus is a disease with a high mortality rate in unvaccinated animals. For horses that are vaccinated for Tetanus only , the interval between the first and second injections is 4-6 weeks, subsequent boosters are at 24 month intervals

Continuing Education for the Equine Team:

Lesley and Goncalo attended a two day course at Bell Equine Hospital in Kent last month that focused on laminitis. The course was lead by a number of specialists from Europe and America who presented the most up to date research on the management and prevention of laminitis.

Euan attended gastro-intestinal and reproduction training at B and W equine in Gloucestershire during March. The course included a practical session on using ultrasound to examine horses gastrointestinal and reproductive system.

Poor performance client afternoon.

The poor performance client evening held at Fairmoor equine clinic was very well attended . The evening started with a talk by Lesley Barwise-Munro discussing the different causes of poor performance and updates about diagnosis and treatment. This was followed by three demonstrations; the first being a live heart scan with Gonçalo, who using ultrasonography can examine the function of the horses various heart chambers and valves . This was followed by a physiotherapy demonstration by Hazel Potter. Thirdly a demonstration of the Equinosis electronic lameness locator system which uses a number of sensors fitted to the horse's head, forelimbs and hindquarters that measure changes that can be associated with lameness.



Farrier CPD day

Our annual farrier training day will be held on the 18th of April at the Gubeon Equestrian Centre, Morpeth. The day will consist of morning lectures led by Jim Ferrie FWCF, Jay Tovey FWCF and Henrik Berger FWCF and afternoon practicals. The day is open to farriers, vets and physiotherapists. To book please contact Barbara Buglass at Fairmoor Equine Clinic.

Service promotions

Laser Sarcoid removal - Laser surgery provides one of the most effective ways to removal cancerous growths such as melanomas and sarcoids from the skin of a horse. Most sarcoids can be removed under standing sedation. This service can be offered at Fairmoor equine clinic.



We continue to run our excellent value Friday Dental Promotion

This applies to horses brought to our Fairmoor Equine Clinic (Morpeth) for a Routine Veterinary Dental Exam every Friday.

Pre-booking necessary.

**Routine Dental Examination
with Sedation—£68.00,
without Sedation—£52.50**

Castration Special - Due to continuing high demand we are extending our offer on colt castrations again, at the extremely competitive price of **£89 incl. VAT** including the drugs for sedation. Please note that a visit fee also applies for colts that are NOT brought into the Fairmoor Equine Clinic.

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