



PROUD TO BE AN INDEPENDENT EQUINE PRACTICE OWNED BY VETS

HEAD OFFICE: 64 FORE STREET, NORTH TAWTON, DEVON, EX20 2DT

MEDICATION COLLECTION POINTS: OKEHAMPTON, HATHERLEIGH AND HOLSWORTHY

WE HAVE A PRIZE WINNER AMONGST OUR TEAM!!!

The Directors kindly allow staff to bring their dogs to work! At our Christmas Party, awards were given out which included:

The Best-Behaved Dog!

Daisy Moast belonging to our receptionist Rachel was delighted to be the proud winner and is now enjoying her prizes!



EQUUS VETS NEWSLETTER DECEMBER 2025

It has been a busy year for Equus Vets and we are proud to have another year of welcoming new clients. This growth has reaffirmed our aim to still offer the most up to date veterinary treatment whilst striving to provide you all with an honest and caring service.

Equus Vets is now the main sponsor at The Grange Equestrian Centre. We are really excited to be part of this venture, and we hope to start using the facilities and host client evenings here.

We are looking to make a few changes to our health plans in 2026. This will include setting up a new plan dedicated to Veterans. We have had a really good uptake of our worming programs. It has allowed us to target your horses' individual worming needs and deciding if treatment is required. As in other species, worm resistance is starting to develop in the equine world and the responsible use of wormers is needed now more than ever.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank you for being clients of Equus Vets.

Wishing you all a lovely Christmas and New Year.



CHRISTMAS OPENING HOURS



Over the Christmas period, our Surgery opening hours are:

24th December – 08.30 to 15.30
25th December – Closed
26th December – Closed
29th December – 08.30 - 17.30
30th December – 08.30 - 17.30
31st December – 08.30 - 15.30
1st January – Closed

Our usual Out of Hours service will be active providing you with 24/7 care

WINTER MOT DEAL

Would you like to be sure that your horse is going into winter with everything as it should be?

Suitable for golden oldies or younger horses

- ✓ Dental examination and teeth rasp
- ✓ General profile blood test
- ✓ Full clinical examination
- ✓ Walk and trot up
- ✓ Dietary advice
- ✓ Worm egg count

Costing £135 inc VAT

Subsidised by 30%!

Call us
01837 214004

Email us
info@equusvets.co.uk

Visit Our Website
www.equusvets.co.uk

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OSTEOARTHRITIS

As we move through the winter riding season, many horses can begin to show subtle signs of stiffness or discomfort. One of the most common and leading causes of this is osteoarthritis (OA).

OA is a progressive, degenerative joint condition that affects horses of all ages and disciplines. The cartilage cushion breaks down over time within the joint capsule, leading to inflammation (synovitis), which then causes pain and discomfort. Over time, this can cause the joint capsule to become thickened, bone spurs to form, reduced range of motion and in severe cases cause joint collapse or fusion of the joint space, leading to stiff and lame horses.

Early recognition and proactive management can make all the difference in maintaining your horse's comfort, performance, and long-term soundness. Additionally, this allows us to place preventive measures in place before the changes become chronic and more difficult to treat.

Here are some common signs to look for:

- Stiffness when being worked
- Shortened stride or uneven gait - "maybe not lame but just not right"
- Heat or, swelling around joints
- Reluctance to flex, bend, or pick up the correct lead.
- Reluctant to lift the leg for the farrier or when picking feet out
- Reduced range of motion of the limb/joint
- Reduced performance or behavioral changes under saddle

How can we help:

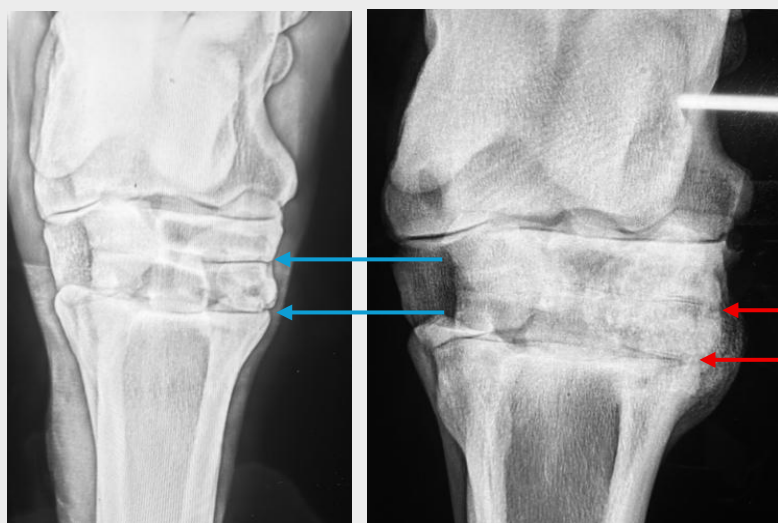
Any horse showing these signs should be given a thorough and full physical examination by a vet. This typically would include:

- Gait analysis "lameness exam": to determine is the horse lame, how lame, which limb and which surface is the lameness worse on? Answers to these questions allow us to pinpoint lameness further
- Flexion tests: allow us to apply slight, gentle and controlled pressure on to specific joints / structures to give more in depth answers to the above questions and cause of the lameness.

Diagnosis

After clinical examination and history, the best diagnostic tool is radiography which allows us say with more confidence which joint is affected and how severely.

For example:



Severe case of osteoarthritis in the hock joint. The red arrows show collapse of joint spaces and potentially fusion of these joint spaces causing a mass of joint inflammation and discomfort for this horse – this is chronic change. The blue arrows show the space in a healthy joint as a comparison.

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The same horse to the right, the red circle shows you how progressive osteoarthritis can be and the chronic changes that can occur with bony remodelling – this remodelling is causing significant reduced range of motion, stiffness and above all else inflammation



Treatment Options

There is no definitive cure for OA, however some treatment options will help control the inflammation within the joint, slow the disease progression and make the horse more comfortable. This can include:

- Joint Injections
- Corticosteroids to reduce inflammation
- Hyaluronic acid (HA) to improve lubrication and joint health
- Arthramid - polyacrylamide hydrogel (iPAAG).
- Biologic therapies such as PRP or Pro-Stride to target inflammation naturally

Pain & Inflammation Management

- Anti-inflammatory (NSAIDs) such as Bute, Danilon or Equioxx
- Cartrophen
- Cold therapy during flare-ups
- Oral joint supplements, for example glucosamine, chondroitin, MSM, omega-3 fatty acids
- Rehabilitation & Physical Therapy to strengthen and support muscles, including controlled exercise plans or acupuncture

Lifestyle change is just as important as medical intervention and treatment. Small changes can make a big difference, for example:

- Prevent long periods of being stabled and stood; turnout or gentle regular exercise will encourage natural movement and prevent the joints from stiffening up
- Regular farrier care and good hoof balance
- Appropriate footing in arenas and paddocks, to reduce strain and extra pressure on degrading, inflamed joints
- Conditioning programs that avoid sudden increases in workload
- Weight management is very important to reduce additional weight bearing loads and strain on aging joints

Whether your horse is a senior, an athlete, happy hacker or a beloved pet, we are committed to helping them stay comfortable, mobile and happy. If you have questions about osteoarthritis or would like to schedule a lameness evaluation, please contact the practice anytime.

Early evaluation helps us treat problems before they become chronic or severe

Wishing you and your horses a sound Happy Christmas period and a Happy New Year ahead!

AREA DAYS FOR EAST CORNWALL IN JANUARY 2026

w/c 12th January

w/c 26th January

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