



July 2017

Issue #2

VIP NEWS

Unlocking your horses potential from the inside out

VANI's first year at HOY A great success, despite the MUD!!!



We had a great time meeting new and existing clients down at Horse of the Year in Hastings in March. Unfortunately many of the events had to be cancelled due to the torrential rain that resulted in some serious mud! To every cloud there must be a silver lining and for VANI it meant we got to meet and help several new and existing clients and even get our hands dirty and do some consultations with horses at the event. We were so thrilled with the success of our first ever event that we are already planning for our next workshops and events around the country in 2017. Thank you to all that stopped by and talked to us! This month we focus on a topic that popped up more than any other at HOY this year - Gastric Ulceration.

1

PACKAGES

We have a range of veterinary and nutritional packages to suit everyone.

2

FARM VISITS

VANI specialises in on farm consultations where we come to you and address your horses requirements

3

PRESCRIPTION DIETS

VANI can create a perfectly balanced diet based on your horses individual requirements

Gastric Ulcers

This months feature that affects too many of our horses. Read more on pages 2-3.

Sign up to receive our newsletter every month

It's easy just sign up online, on Facebook or flick us an email with your details and we'll add you to the list.

See what VANI has been up to

and where we will be for the next couple of months on page 4.

Send us your favourite pics of your horse and we will pick a few each month to feature on our newsletters.

Thanks to some of our valued clients that have sent in pictures this month. See these on Page 5!

Talk to us!

Let us know if there is a topic you'd like to hear more about. We might just feature it next time.

TOPIC OF THE MONTH

Equine Gastric Ulcer Syndrome. **A painful and common disease.**

Vets corner with Petra

Dr Petra Hazlitt BVSc, BSc

What is Equine Gastric Ulcer Syndrome?

Equine Gastric Ulcer Syndrome (EGUS) is a very significant and common disease. There are two parts of the stomach that can be affected, the squamous (top part) and the glandular (bottom part) of the stomach. Ulcers can occur independently in each part or can be present in both. It is reported that between 11-95% of horses suffer from this condition depending on the breed of horse and their management (1). Thoroughbred racehorses have the highest prevalence of EGUS, but it is seen in most breeds. It is also very common in horses and ponies who are on restricted diets like laminitic prone minis!

The most common signs a horse suffers from ulcers are

- Failure to thrive and weight loss
- Inappetence
- Mild colic
- Behavioural changes such as being 'girthy' or grumpy around feeding time
- Poor coat condition
- Performance issues like a shorter stride length and fatiguing sooner (2,3)



A horse presenting with 'bad behaviours' such as being girthy, crib biting or windsucking may have ulcers

Diagnosis

The gold standard to diagnose EGUS is a gastroscopy where a camera is passed through a horse's nostril and into their stomach. It is best to talk to your local veterinarian for costs and availability of this procedure. The benefit is that it can be determined if your horse has squamous and or glandular disease. It also allows the severity of the ulcers to be graded and then treatment success can be monitored with a follow-up scope. Alternatively a treatment trial can be used as a diagnostic tool if gastroscopy is not available.



Gastroscopy is the gold standard for diagnosis of EGUS but when it isn't available a treatment trial may be used .

Treatment options

Unfortunately once ulcers are present they rarely heal by themselves. Treatment consists of medical therapy with a drug called omeprazole. This inhibits acid secretion in the stomach. Long term treatment of this drug is considered safe. When possible the drug should be given around 20 minutes before feeding and 30 minutes before exercise to ensure maximal absorption. If a gastroscope finds that there is damage to the glandular (bottom part of the stomach) then treatment will need to be carried out for longer than if the ulcers are only in the squamous stomach and other drugs may also be prescribed by your veterinarian. VANI can work with you and your Veterinarian with a management programme to help overcome EGUS.



In the feed room with Nikita

Nikita Stowers

Nutritionist MSc BSc BBS.
Member of the NZARN



Gastric ulcers are a common problem for horses in New Zealand and all over the world. Luckily we can reduce the risk or cure cases of recurring gastric ulceration with dietary changes alongside medical therapy.

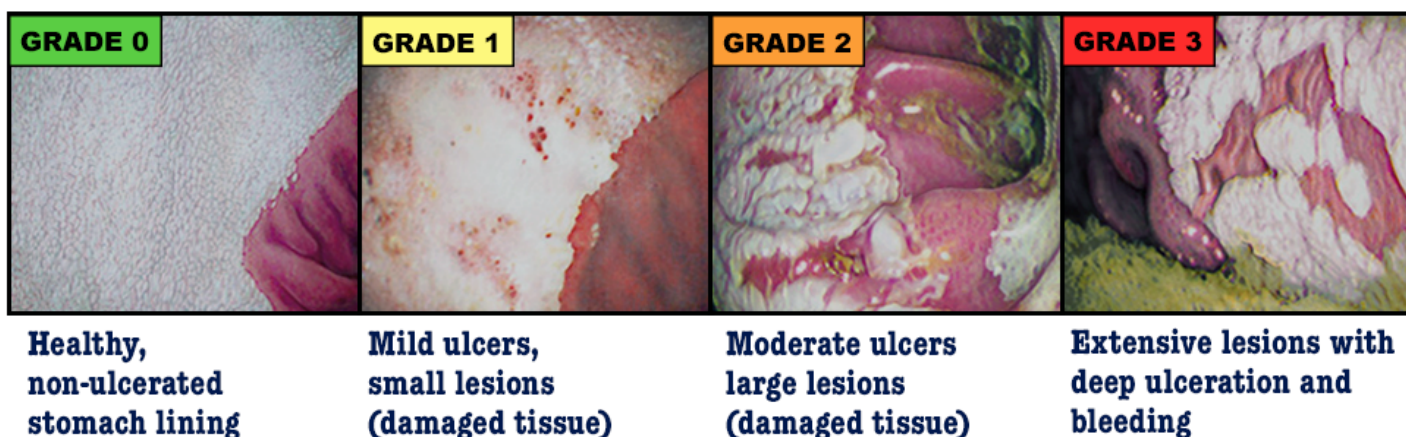
How did my horse get Ulcers in the first place?

The mature horse secretes approximately 1.5 litres of gastric juice into the stomach every hour ⁽⁴⁾. The pH (acidity) of the gastric contents depend on the feeding regimen and the region of the stomach measured⁽⁴⁾. The horse has evolved as a non-ruminant, grazing herbivore, this setup is perfect for a foraging animal who spends up to 18 hours per day eating. Saliva helps to buffer the pH of the gastric juice and this is how digestion starts. However, modern management practices, including meal feeding often within an enclosed environment with limited opportunity for free movement, low fibre/high concentrate diets, early weaning and intensive training programmes, are believed to produce a poorly buffered, acidic environment in the stomach, which can lead to the formation of ulcers ^(4, 5).

How can a feeding programme help my horse?

Gastric ulcers are a frustrating disease for horse owners and a painful one for their horses. However they can be managed with effective medical therapy alongside a low risk feeding management programme. The focus of a feeding programme for a horse with gastric ulceration is to maintain a 'low risk' environment in the stomach to minimise irritation of existing ulcers and to prevent new ulcers from forming. This is a multi-tongued approach and the exact feeding programme will depend on many factors including the horses age, workload, breed and whether or not they have other health conditions to consider as well as what feed is available to the horse owner.

Cereal grain based feeds are usually avoided or minimised during a feeding management programme for a horse with ulcers as starch and grain based feeds high in sugar and starch have been shown to increase the risk of gastric ulceration ⁽⁴⁾. Some feeds may be included for their protective or beneficial effect, such as Lucerne and those high in calcium. Another important consideration is timing of feeding and ensuring horses don't go prolonged periods on an empty stomach. VANI specialises in tailoring complete feeding programmes for individuals, rather than focusing on any specific product. Please contact us if you think your horse might have ulcers and we can create a programme specifically for your horse. Feel free to contact us on our website w: www.vani.nz or drop us an email e: nikita@vani.nz or call +64 21 563 272. We'd love to hear from you!



Gastric ulcers vary in their severity and placement in the stomach. These factors will impact on how long treatment is required for and recovery time.



OUT AND ABOUT WITH VANI

Get in touch with us to catch up at one of these events

May

Nikita was in the UK from April the 27th until May the 25th. While she was over there she was on the lookout for new feed ideas and tips to help our horses over here, including at the Badminton Horse Trials and the Irish National Stud. Congratulations to Andrew Nicholson and Nereo and all the Kiwis that competed at Badminton. You certainly did NZ proud!

June

VANI was out and about in the Waikato and Auckland this month as well as catching up with new and existing clients from all around the country. Get in touch to book your consult for 2017 today! Remember we can come and see you at home, at an event or even do many consultations online and over the phone so get in touch.

July - October

VANI will be running 1 day practical based workshops in August - December this year. Event locations may include the Manawatu, Hawkes Bay, Taranaki, Waikato, Auckland and Northland. Exact event locations TBC. Let us know if you are interested in attending and we will put your name on the list! Spaces are limited to 10 per workshop so sign up early to avoid disappointment. Simply email us with your name and the location you would be interested in attending and we will send you some more information. In the workshops we will cover: Basic nutrient requirements of horses, Practical feeding recommendations for NZ conditions, Diet balancing workshop, Individualised feeding programme for your horse. Cost for the workshop is \$150 per person.

Sign up to become a VANI VIP [here](#) and receive our next newsletter automatically in September!

12th August 2017 - Nikita will be presenting at the Tuakau Adult Riding Club Information Rally alongside Pokeno Vets

GET IN TOUCH WITH US

www.vani.nz

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Find us on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram @vaniequine



VĀNI VIP's (Very Important Ponies!)

At VĀNI we take pictures all the time of horses to track their progress towards their goals. We often get pictures sent in from our clients as well. Please send us your pictures and stories and your pony may just end up in our Newsletter!



Denise McCormack's horse Dude enjoying his free range horse safe herbs. Happy to report Dude has fattened up somewhat since this picture was taken and is in great condition for winter.

Lucy Robertshaw's twin foals are just too cute and super correct and healthy. Lucy's mare is looking great too and attributes their health to a great diet and Platinum Performance Minerals.



References used in EGUS article:

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2. Poor performance associated with Equine Gastric Ulceration Syndrome in four Thoroughbred racehorses. Franklin, S.H., Brazil, T.J. and Allen, K.J., 2008. Equine Veterinary Education, 20(3), pp 119-124
3. Effect of gastric ulceration on physiologic responses to exercise in horses. Neito J.E., Snyder, J.R., Vastistas, N.J., Jones, J.H, (2009). American Journal of Vet Research, 70, pp 787-795.
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5. Andrews, F.M., Buchanan, B.R., Smith, S., Elliott, S.B. and Saxton, A.M. (2006) In vitro effects of hydrochloric acid and various concentrations of acetic, propionic, butyric or valeric acids on bioelectric properties of equine gastric mucosa. Am. J. vet. Res. 67, 1873-1882.