Equine Gastric Ulceration Syndrome (EGUS)

A serious and common condition that could be affecting your horse or foal\(^1,2\)
EGUS is a serious and common condition that could affect your horse or foal\textsuperscript{1,2}

How common is EGUS? \textsuperscript{1,3,4}

EGUS affects up to 54\% of leisure horses

up to 65\% of performance/competition horses

...and up to 93\% of racehorses in training

Approximately 50\% of foals develop gastric ulcers, particularly during the first few months of their life\textsuperscript{5}
What is EGUS?

- EGUS is a disease associated with injury to the inner lining of the oesophagus, stomach and the upper part of the intestine.²
- Your horse produces a steady flow of stomach acid to aid in digestion.¹
- Their naturally acidic stomach contents are buffered by saliva produced in response to regular eating and by the food itself.²
- Domestication (e.g. stabling, restricted grazing) has reduced the time our horses spend eating - resulting in prolonged periods when the stomach is empty and reduced production of saliva.
- In addition feeding grain (rather than roughage) can produce types of acid which contribute to the already acidic environment of the stomach.¹

What causes EGUS?

There are many risk factors that may cause your horse or foal to suffer from gastric ulcers. These include:¹,²

- Transportation
- Stress
- Other illnesses
- Intense exercise
- Intermittent feeding & water
- High-grain diet
- Inappropriate management
Does your horse or foal have any of the following clinical signs?

Horse\textsuperscript{2}

- Poor appetite
- Poor body condition
- Changes in attitude
- Acute and recurrent colic
- Poor performance

In adult horses, clinical signs may appear, and or progress, as training intensity, speed and workload increase.\textsuperscript{2}

Foal\textsuperscript{2,4}

- Poor appetite
- Poor body condition
- Changes in attitude
- Acute and recurrent colic
- Regurgitation of milk
- Diarrhoea

Clinical signs in foals can initially be very subtle and progress rapidly therefore it is important to contact your vet immediately if you have any concerns\textsuperscript{2}

The only accurate way to definitively diagnose or monitor EGUS is by a process known as gastroscopy,\textsuperscript{1} which involves a vet visualising and examining your horse’s oesophagus, stomach and intestine using a gastroscope.

References: