



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

It has been a cold winter for Floridians, but the weather seems to be warming up and outside activities are beginning. These outside activities include trail riding and showing. During the winter season, Dr. Rachel Helm attended a convention and came back with an idea for a wellness program to start your year off with savings and good health for your horse. (See article below.) Our new FEVS Wellness Program is a packaged well care program for your horse at a discount! See the article below or call the FEVS office with questions. Remember — as you venture out, please make sure you and your horse are protected! That means current vaccinations for your horse and a current coggins for your travel!



Dr. Denney-Jones

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Joint Maintenance

Like any athletes in any sport, our horses work hard for us every day. But what happens when they start getting older and need a little more help?

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E. Denney-Jones, DVM

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FEVS WELLNESS PROGRAM — SIGN UP FOR YOURS TODAY!

By Dr. Rachel Helm

Blanket deworming, while easy and not cost prohibitive, is not necessarily the best thing for your horse. Deworming every horse on the property not only encourages parasite resistance but also leads to some horses getting medication that is not needed. It has been documented that only 20-30 percent of the horse population on a given farm harbor 80 percent of the parasite burden. For example, on a farm with ten horses, two to three of them are seeding the environment with viable parasites and need to be dewormed more frequently. This also means that seven to eight of the horses are being *overtreated* with medication that is not necessary.



Dr. Rachel Helm

The goal of the FEVS Wellness Program is to promote *targeted* deworming of only horses that need it. Using knowledge of the parasite life cycle and egg shedding potential of each horse, we can create a plan that is tailored to fit your horse's needs. We will also include AAEP-recommended twice a year and once a year vaccinations, as well as a coggins test and basic dental. The best part about this program is you will receive a five percent discount on all services outside the program for one year!



I'm so busy, I don't know if I found a rope or lost my horse!

**JOINT MAINTENANCE:
WHAT, WHY, WHEN?**

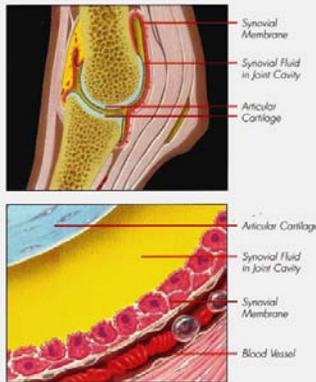
By Dr. Heather Farmer

Like any athletes in any sport, our horses work hard for us every day. In order for them to perform for us at any level, whether it be trail riding, dressage, jumping or just that wonderful lesson horse to teach beginner riders, they all need to stay in shape. We start by exercising them as often as we can to strengthen the muscles, tendons and ligaments throughout their bodies. But what happens when our horses start getting older and need a little more help?

That is where **joint injections** come into play, either into the joint (intraarticular) or to stimulate joint health (intramuscular/intravenous). Have you heard the following statements either from your FEVS veterinarian, trainer, or someone else at the barn?

- My horse is getting sticky off the ground.
- My horse really wants to swap leads behind in the canter.
- My horse used to get her lead changes.
- My horse's trot feels very uncomfortable lately and has no rhythm.
- The vet says my horse has positive flexions. (range of motion test)

The healthy joint structure.



The Healthy equine fetlock joint.

These are all common first signs that our horses are hurting. Most horses that successfully compete in athletic events suffer from lameness at some stage of their careers. Lameness is the number one reason for early retirement in both racehorses and performance horses. Most lameness cases are associated with damage to the joint tissue.



Dr. Farmer

The joint gets damaged repetitively over time due to many factors such as genetics, conformation, required work, physical ability to do the work asked and fitness level. **Some of these factors we cannot change, but most of them we can!**

First, a joint consists of two or more bones (the ends covered in cartilage), synovial fluid between them and an outer capsule that comprises ligaments to stabilize the joint.

When the cartilage starts to be damaged, one of the first things that happens is a decrease in the thickness of synovial fluid in the joint. This is due to inflammation of the cartilage on the ends of the bones. Inflammation thins the synovial fluid and causes damage to the cartilage. The horse's body responds by adding more fluid and a vicious cycle has started. Once the process starts, we cannot reverse it, but there are many things that we can do to keep it regulated. **This is where your joint supplements and joint injections come into the picture.**

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If you would like to be added to our mailing list, give us a call or send us your address.

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Have a question for "Ask the Vet"? Want to announce a new foal? Need information on a particular equine topic? Send us an email to fevsoffice@aol.com.

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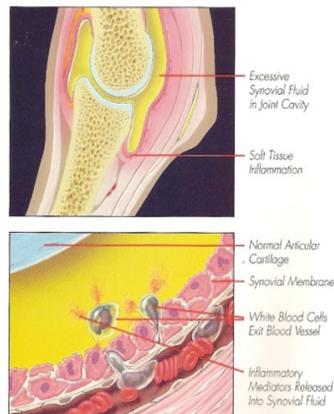
Joint supplements are a way to increase the thickness of the fluid and to give the horse's body the base proteins needed to make the healthiest joint fluid. Your FEVS veterinarian uses products like Adequan, Legend, Cosequin, Hylartin and many others to keep joint fluid healthy, extend the time between joint injections or help prolong when you will need to start joint injections. Legend is an intravenous (in the vein) injection while Adequan is an intramuscular (in the muscle) injection. Both products have a loading dose period. Both products work in different ways to accomplish the goal of healthier joints. The other products listed, plus many more, are oral supplements with any combination of Glucosamine, chondroitin, hyaluronic acid, ASU, MSM and many other compounds with the same goal of promoting healthy joints. These products are all great to use on a daily basis.

Joint injections are the next step. The procedure is easy and relatively painless to the horse. Your FEVS veterinarian will do a sterile prep to the skin overlaying the joint that is deemed the painful one, then insert a needle in the joint, then perform a visual analysis of the fluid, and finally inject a combination of products into the joint.

The most typical products that are used are a combination of a steroid and antibiotic. The steroid is injected to stop the inflammatory process and give the joint time to settle down. Most veterinarians choose to add hyaluronic acid (HA) products to their injection. Adding HA directly to the joint helps increase the overall health of the joint and can extend out the time in between injections. Most commonly used is Hylartin-V, but others include Legend IA, Adequan IA, Hyvisc and some others. **The choice depends on the joint injected and the degree of lameness seen on examination.** As your horse ages and there is more wear and tear on the joints, it may become necessary to do injections or increase the frequency to keep your horse happy, healthy and competitive.

There is new research out almost monthly about joints, injections and new products being tested for improved joint health.

Inflamed joint.



Look at the difference in the inflamed joint.

cartilage or repairing it to some degree.

Take another look at the symptoms of joint pain or damage on the previous page and if one or more of them sound like your horse, contact your FEVS Veterinarian to arrange an appointment

If you have an older horse that injections have worked for in the past and they just do not seem to work any longer, **there are two new procedures that your FEVS veterinarian can perform: IRAP and Stem Cells.** Both of these procedures are showing great promise in keeping joints healthy. A Stem Cell injection is showing some promise in actually regenerating the

Does the economy have you down? Wondering how you are going to provide for your four-legged family? Let **Care Credit** help!! Care Credit is a credit card that can be used for expenses on your furry family. Our office accepts it for your big kids. Many small animal hospitals AND several medical specialists accept it as well! You may be thinking "I already have TOO many credit cards. I DO NOT need one more!" Care Credit is different! It allows you to maintain routine care and cover those unforeseen emergencies that sometimes come up. And the best part? **6 months interest free** on all purchases! Extended payment plans with a decreased interest rate are also available for larger purchases. For more information, or to apply, go to www.carecredit.com or call (800) 365-8295!!

Remember: We can fit you into our schedule faster if you haul your horse into the FEVS clinic!

FEVS will be closed May 31, 2010.

KEEPING UP WITH THE INDUSTRY

Your FEVS veterinary staff has been busy keeping up on the latest technology in equine medicine.

Doctors Jones and Farmer went to the American Association of Equine Practitioners (AAEP) meeting in December 2009 where they attended lectures on lameness, sports medicine, imaging techniques and also reproduction.

Dr. Helm just returned from the North American Veterinary Conference (NAVC) where she attended lectures on preventative medicine, lameness, wound healing and geriatric medicine.

Dr. Jones just returned from a Pfizer Meeting with information on 2 new products, an antibiotic and a sedative.

We are proud to announce that Dr Farmer was elected to the AAEP's Owner Education Committee in December and will serve a three-year term.

COME SEE OUR NEW ADDITION!

It was exciting to see so many clients at our FEVS Christmas Party, where we featured our new addition. If you have not seen the addition yet, please stop by and visit with us! We are also building our equine skeleton and hope to have that completed by summer for the summer camps.



OFFICE HOURS

Call Lynne to make your horse appointment Monday through Friday 8-11am and 12-4pm. Our office at 19801 CR 561 in Clermont is also open for drop-off's and

Look for the next issue of Horse Sense in Summer 2010!



PO Box 120913
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Your horse's health is our business.