



Woodside & Woodside North Equine Clinic Equine Health Times

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What's going on at Woodside Equine Clinic?

Dr. Burke and her husband Bruce welcomed their daughter Alice to their family, born April 8th, 2014!

Dr. Anderson attended the ISELP continuing education module focusing on the stifle in California in early April.

Dr. True gave a presentation at Ashland Feed regarding parasite control.

Read about the lives of our veterinary interns in their blog

[Diaries of a Veterinary](#)

The Skinny On Your Horse's Skin

Dr. Charlotte Tate

As many of you have seen from our posts on Facebook or from your own experiences, skin disease can be very troublesome to both you as an owner and to your horse. In many cases once a horse develops a skin disease, it can be a constant agonizing battle. As a horse owner, one of the most common areas of injury or disease you may encounter is the skin. The skin is the first line of defense an animal has against the environment because it provides a physical barrier to the outside world. So what can we do to make sure a horse's skin is ready for battle with the elements? As with so many aspects of animal care it boils down to management. Some of the key aspects for managing skin are providing good nutrition, grooming and a clean and safe environment.



Intern

by:

Dr. Courtney Bowers

and

Dr. Candice Lorandean

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The most important dietary components for promoting healthy skin and hair coat are proteins and fats with additional benefits from vitamins and minerals. The skin and hair utilize protein more than any other organ system. Therefore, if your horse's diet is deficient in protein, you may start to see a dull hair coat or dry skin. Fortunately, a diet composed of good to excellent quality forage will meet a horse's protein requirement. As for fatty acids, often supplementation is necessary to ensure your horse is getting the essential fatty acids - linoleic and linolenic acid - in their diet. These fatty acids are called "essential" because they cannot be synthesized by the body. If you are not sure your horse's diet is meeting the daily requirements of these key nutrients, ask your veterinarian for a nutritional consult.

Grooming includes much of what we do with our horse such as daily brushing and hoof care, clipping, bathing and regular sheath care. Why is this so important? What are we doing when we groom a horse? We are maintaining the skin's homeostasis. The normal skin surface is composed of byproducts of sweat, exfoliated skin cells, bacteria, dirt, pollen, grains and mold spores. If this debris is allowed to accumulate the normal balance of the skin can be altered which may adversely affect a current skin condition or facilitate the development of a secondary infection. This is why it is very important to groom your horse daily. Not only is it important to remove debris from your horse's skin, but you should also check your horse regularly for cuts, abrasions, parasites and skin tumors. If your stallion or gelding won't let you fully clean and inspect his sheath an annual examination by your veterinarian is recommended.



www.wikihow.com

What are the best ways to clean your horse's skin? Are special shampoos necessary? Does your horse have dry skin? Ideally a good shampoo will lather well, rinse freely, leave no residue and remove soil rather than natural oils. Additionally, we need to consider the pH of the shampoo. The

natural pH of horse skin is neutral (7.0-7.4), which is not the same for human skin. Therefore, although Herbal Essence smells great, it may not be the best choice for your horse. In many instances a bath with water is all that a horse needs. Water as a therapeutic agent can often be overlooked. Water removes crusts, bacteria and other debris, moistens the skin, cools and heats. However, prolonged water exposure can lead to skin degradation, making it very important to remove excess water after bathing. Towel dry and legs and allow the skin to fully dry.

When it comes to creating a safe environment, we all know that some horses may have a propensity for getting into things whether out in a field or in a stall. Therefore it's important to reduce the risk by regularly checking your pastures for fallen debris, loose fencing, holes and nails. Keeping your pastures mowed will also reduce prolonged moisture exposure from the dew in the morning and evening and create a less favorable environment for ticks and other parasites.

Clean dry bedding is also very important for skin health. Urine-soaked bedding is undesirable not only because of its unpleasant odor, but because it can damage your horse's skin. Urine is usually alkaline (higher in pH) and horse skin is neutral. While you may like to get a good peel at the spa, your horse does not need one in their stall. If you have a horse with scratches, or lower leg skin disease, it may be helpful to be bedded more deeply to keep urine away from the skin surface. This will reduce moisture exposure and help to maintain the skin's natural pH. Hopefully, you have all found this month's topic informative. If you have any questions or concerns about your horse's skin, please make a note and remember to ask your veterinarian at your next appointment. Just remember - an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure!

Blog: Diaries of a Veterinary Intern

What to Expect When You're Expecting: Foaling 101 - *Dr. Candice Lorandean*

Foaling season is in full swing, and can sometimes be a very stressful time of year for both mares and owners! So your pregnant mare is approaching her due date (on average 342 days after ovulation)... what can you expect? Here's a general timeline of how a healthy foaling should go.

If your mare will not be foaling at home, she should be moved to the site where she will be foaling so she can adjust to the new surroundings. Depending on the situation this should be 2-4 weeks prior to the mare's due date. During this time period, if a Caslick is in place it should be opened. The udder should be cleaned if dirty and monitored for size and secretions. Some changes that indicate foaling is approaching include udder development, laxity of the vulva and relaxation of the pelvic ligaments around her tail. These signs are particularly evident within the

last 2 weeks of gestation. A change in the amount and character of secretions - waxing (dried colostrum on the teats) or dripping milk -often indicate....

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Our practice devotes its charitable giving efforts to the AAEP foundation. The foundation is committed to supporting education, research and benevolent efforts for horses and their caretakers. If you'd like more information or to donate to the Foundation you can visit the website at [AAEP Foundation](#).

Sincerely,

Woodside & Woodside North Equine Clinic