



Woodside & Woodside North Equine Clinic Equine Health Times

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"Slobbers" Slaframine Toxicity

Have you noticed your horse excessively salivating recently? Slaframine is a toxin produced by a fungus that grows on clover and alfalfa grass and hay. This fungus, also called "black patch", flourishes in wet, cool conditions. Most commonly, this toxicity is just an unsightly annoyance, but extreme cases can cause colic, diarrhea and dehydration!

Common Misconceptions Concerning Joint Injections

Scott Anderson, DVM



Joint injections are some of the most common procedures performed on horses. There are many misconceptions related to them. Joint injections usually have very positive outcomes allowing many horses to recover from injuries, continue to perform at higher levels and stay comfortable performing their jobs. But they are also an invasive procedure that should not be taken lightly.

There are times that horse owners have misconceptions about joint injections. While the last thing we want to do is ask a client to have a procedure performed that they are uncomfortable with, it is important to help owners make an informed decision that can help their horse.

1. **Once a joint is injected it will continue to need injecting**



What have our Doctors been up to?

Dr. Dave Stanford attended the Society for Theriogenology's annual conference on reproduction in Portland, OR

Dr. Megan Mathias, one of our two new interns, attended Haverhill Farm's summer horse camp to give a lecture on the topic of the Equine Eye.

Read about the lives of our veterinary interns in their blog

[Diaries of a Veterinary Intern](#)

by:
[Dr. Megan Mathias](#)
and
[Dr. Kara Brown](#)

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Some people think when a joint is injected then it must continue to be injected due to changes the injection causes. In an acute situation when a joint has a recent injury and is inflamed, a joint injection can often be part of a therapeutic plan. In this situation the joint may never need to be injected again.

Arthritis is the most common reason for joint injections. An injection will reduce the inflammation in an arthritic joint for a period of time. The time frame the joint responds depends on many variables: severity of arthritis, how the horse is used, etc. When the inflammation returns if the owner would like for the horse to be comfortable again then they often re-inject. The re-injection is necessary because of the original problem: arthritis, not because of having a prior injection.

2. Injecting steroids into a joint is detrimental to the joint

There is research proving both negative and positive effects of steroids on the health of joints. The articular cartilage of the joint is one of the main areas of concern affected by steroids. It is the smooth surface in joints that allows for gliding motion with minimal friction. Inflammation in the joint can lead to the destruction of the cartilage. Certain dosages and types of steroid protect the cartilage by reducing inflammation. Too high of dosages and frequency of steroid injections can be bad for the health of the cartilage. We are very aware of these levels and use steroids in a safe manner

3. Joint injections will cause infection in the joint

Because joint injections are an invasive procedure, infection is a possible outcome. This is extremely rare. We take great precautions in preparing an area for injection and using sterile technique for the procedure to minimize this risk.

4. Clipping or shaving the hair before injecting must be done to keep the joint from becoming infected

Surprisingly clipping and shaving the hair at the injection site can potentially increase the chance of infection by over two fold. We will occasionally clip when the hair coat is extremely long /dirty or when we are doing ultrasound guided injections.

5. Joint injections will predispose all horses to laminitis

This has been another topic with a lot of controversy. There is not scientific proof this can occur but there is anecdotal information leaning in this direction. Many believe if a horse is overweight and is close to the

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edge of the onset of laminitis then steroids can push them over the edge. We consider this when injecting joints and take precautions to keep this risk minimal.

6. You can only inject a joint a certain number of times

We often hear clients say their doctors have put limits on the number of times they can have their own joints injected. This isn't something that is described in veterinary literature.

If you have further questions regarding joint injections for your horse, or you would like to schedule an appointment, please contact **Woodside Equine Clinic** at (804) 798-2703 or **Woodside North Equine Clinic** at (540) 423-3100.

Blog: Diaries of a Veterinary Intern

"Wound Cleaning-- What to Have on Hand and What to Toss Out"

By: Megan Mathias, DVM

"As horse owners and caretakers, we all know that horses are professionals at finding ways to get nicks, bumps, scrapes, and lacerations. No matter how neat their stall or paddock is, we should inspect our horses from head to hoof each day to look for signs of injury. Many minor scrapes and cuts that involve only the skin and are located away from joints and the eye can be cared for at home without the need for veterinary attention....This blog post specifically discusses which products are best for the cleaning of wounds.

...To read more about , please visit [*Diaries of a Veterinary Intern*](#) at Woodside Equine Clinic's website.

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