

FEEDING RECOMMENDATIONS FOR HORSES AT RISK OF GASTRIC ULCERS IN WA

These recommendations address known risk factors for Gastric Ulceration and can be used as an aid to management of horses at risk of Gastric Ulceration or irritation.

1. Allow horses constant access to forage – always offer stabled or yarded horses ad lib hay.
2. Feed lucerne hay as the preferred source of forage. Lucerne has greater buffering properties than grass hay, and has been shown to increase pH in the stomach and reduce severity of gastric ulcers.
3. Give a small meal (500g-1kg) of lucerne chaff or hay 30-60 minutes before the horse undergoes any work to provide buffering of acid that is splashed around the stomach during exercise.
4. Reduce starch intake by reducing grain intake, feeding a low starch feed and supplying more energy from fat and digestible fibre. **Pegasus Liberty** is a low starch moderate energy feed that is useful for horses prone to gastric ulceration. **KER Equi-Jewel** is a high fat stabilized rice bran product that increases the energy supplied by fat and fibre, therefore allowing reduced starch intakes. **Pegasus Liberty** contains beet pulp as a highly digestible super fibre.
5. Whilst omega 3 fatty acids are beneficial in most situations, omega 6 fatty acids have been shown to reduce acid secretion in the stomach. For this reason **KER Equi-Jewel**, sunflower seeds and corn oil are preferred fat supplements for these horses.
6. To increase energy supplied by digestible fibre add beet pulp by feeding **Milne Beeta Pellets**.
7. Keep concentrate meal sizes small, or intakes slow by including lucerne chaff/hay in grain meals.
8. Antacids and gastric coating agents may provide symptomatic relief and work to maintain the horse's appetite. **KER Neigh Lox** can act as a buffer and provides a protective stomach coating. **Neigh Lox** can be used for horses at risk of ulceration, after treatment with acid suppression drugs or when these drugs can't be used due to withholding periods.
9. Many horses with gastric ulceration also have abnormal hindgut function so consider the use of **KERx EquiShure** hindgut balancer.
10. Keep water available to horses at all times.
11. For detailed diet advice for an individual horse contact Kentucky Equine Research or Milne Feeds.

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