



SARCOIDS

The equine sarcoid is a commonly occurring skin tumour that has caused heart-ache for horses and their owners for centuries. Sarcoids are in fact the most common skin tumour of the horse. Although common, sarcoids vary greatly in their size and appearance, the nature in which they grow and potentially multiply and the way they respond to treatment. It is this variability that makes sarcoids such a challenge for both owners and veterinarians.

Some important facts about sarcoids

- All *equid* species are susceptible - even donkeys and zebras
- Although sarcoids are a type of tumour (cancer) they very rarely metastasise (spread to internal organs)
- A horse with one sarcoid is likely to develop more
- Sarcoids can develop anywhere on the horses skin, but more common sites include the chest, groin, sheath and face (especially around the eye and mouth)
- Sarcoids often re-occur, regardless of treatment
- Trauma of any nature to a sarcoid is likely to aggravate it
- No two sarcoids are the same. They can be unpredictable in all aspects of their development
- There is no 'magic cure' for sarcoids. Each sarcoid needs to be assessed on an individual basis

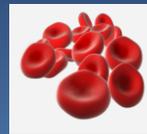
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Our wonderful nursing team



There are 6 broad classifications for equine sarcoids. They include occult, verrucous nodular, fibroblastic, malevolent and mixed. It must be remembered that no two sarcoids are the same and even with these classifications there is variation.

Occult sarcoid

Occult sarcoids appear as roughly circular hairless areas of skin. They often are quite subtle early in their development and sometimes difficult to recognise. They can occasionally be mistaken for 'ring-worm' or even tack rub marks. Occult sarcoids are commonly seen on the nose and side of the face, the armpit and on the inside of the thigh or groin. If accidentally traumatized they have the potential to rapidly develop into one of the more serious types of sarcoids.



Occult sarcoid located on the nose

Verrucous sarcoid

Verrucous sarcoids are 'wart-like' in their appearance. They are often grayish in colour, the skin can crack easily and flakes of scale can often be rubbed off from the surface. They can appear singularly or in groups that merge into larger lesions. Manipulation of verrucous sarcoids is usually not painful but be careful as interference with verrucous sarcoids (as with any sarcoids) can lead to rapid transformation into more

serious and aggressive forms of sarcoids.



Verrucous sarcoid located on the chest

Nodular sarcoid

Nodular sarcoids are firm round nodules that can appear anywhere on the horses body but are often seen in the armpit, on the inside edge of the thigh and groin as well as under the skin of the eyelids. They can be singular or multiple and quite variable in size. Nodular sarcoids are usually covered by a layer of normal skin but can also be ulcerative. They are usually attached to the skin overlying them but sometimes they are freely moveable under the surface. Once again, like all sarcoids, interference either by accident or intentionally via things such as a biopsy or by inappropriate treatment nodular sarcoids are likely to become agitated and rapidly grow and possibly change into more dramatic forms of sarcoids such the fibroblastic type.



Nodular sarcoid in the inguinal region

Fibroblastic sarcoid

Fibroblastic sarcoids are fleshy masses that grow quickly, bleed easily and often have ulcerative surfaces. They are seen anywhere on the horses body and can develop rapidly from milder sarcoids such as verrucous and nodular forms following any degree of damage or interference.



Fibroblastic sarcoid in the inguinal area

Malevolent sarcoid

The malevolent sarcoid is the most aggressive of all the types. It can rapidly spread over a wide area of the horses' body and grow in size just as quickly. The most likely appearance of the malevolent sarcoid is that of ulcerative nodular-like lesions group in large bundles. This condition can be so aggressive in nature that often there are no treatment options. Thankfully malevolent sarcoids are very rare.



Malevolent sarcoid on a horse's head and neck

Mixed sarcoid

The term mixed sarcoid is somewhat of a sub-classification describing a lesion that shows qualities of two or more different sarcoid groups. Sarcoids are commonly described as mixed as a lot of sarcoid lesions will demonstrate some characteristics of another type.



Mixed sarcoid on the ventral abdomen. The left side of the sarcoid (blue) appears to be occult whereas the right side (black) has more of a verrucous appearance.

Sarcoid Treatment

Unfortunately there isn't a magical cure-all treatment for sarcoids. According to sources, there are over 40 different sarcoid treatments world-wide - this clearly demonstrates that there is no one single method that will be effective in each and every case. Each and every sarcoid is different, they are unpredictable by nature and no matter how similar two sarcoids are, what treatment works for one might not work for the other. It is extremely important to remember that each sarcoid needs to be assessed by a veterinarian on an individual basis before any treatment is started. Inappropriate treatment can easily convert a simple sarcoid into something very nasty very quickly.

If you think your horse has a sarcoid, please don't hesitate to contact us to arrange a consultation.

Congratulations

Congratulations to our current intern **Dr Jemma Hayman** and former intern **Dr Josie Faulkner** for receiving the Equine Veterinarians Australia (EVA) Young Members Scholarship to attend the annual EVA Conference. This is a wonderful achievement and we are very proud of them both.



StableLab Serum Amyloid A

StableLab Serum Amyloid A (SAA) has recently become available through our in house laboratory (Equine Diagnostic Laboratories) and is proving to be very useful. SAA is an acute phase protein with a rapid response, which means that when a horse develops inflammation or infection, its SAA levels rise quickly. Thus it is a useful tool to determine quickly whether a horse is developing an infection, prior to other trusted markers, such as fibrinogen or white cell count rising. SAA also has a short half-life of about 24 hours, so it is also quick to fall once the infection is under control. It is therefore useful to monitor in a horse that is being treated for an infection. StableLab SAA has proven reliable and is a valuable addition to our armamentarium of tests in monitoring the health and wellbeing of all horses, especially those in athletic work.



WELCOME

We would like to welcome our new surgeon **Dr Hayley Lang**. A native of Canada, Hayley is a Diplomate of the American College of Veterinary Surgeons and joins us after completing her specialist surgical training at the Cornell University College of Veterinary Medicine. She enjoys all facets of equine surgery and is excited to join the REC team.

Platelet Rich Plasma

Platelet Rich Plasma (PRP) is a natural substance that is derived from a horse's own body. A blood sample is obtained and processed in such a way to produce a volume of plasma that has a high concentration of platelets (cells involved in clotting). This is a rich source of growth factors with the potential to stimulate improved healing responses.

The most common use of PRP is ultrasound guided injection into damaged ligaments and tendons. It is used in addition to a carefully managed graded exercise rehabilitation program to optimise healing and hopefully reduce the risk of re-injury.

PRP is also occasionally used to stimulate improved wound healing and as an intra-articular injection to reduce joint inflammation and promote cartilage repair.



Intralesional injection of PRP into a proximal suspensory ligament

SPORTS MED

Randwick Equine Centre was once again the very proud sponsor of the Winter Eventing Classic at SIEC on the weekend of the 25th/26th of July. Thanks to the organising committee for a wonderful weekend and we looking forward to seeing you again next year.

Our sports med team is very experienced in providing veterinary cover across almost every discipline and is always looking for new ways to support and be involved in equestrian sport. If you or anyone you know are looking for veterinary cover at an event or have sponsorship proposals please don't hesitate to contact us at the clinic.

Welcome Jenni

REC would like to welcome Dr Jenni Hawke as our newest intern. Jenny worked for us for several years as a veterinary nurse prior to completing her studies at the University of Sydney Vet School. Welcome back and best of luck for the year ahead!