IDENTIFYING THE DIFFERENT GRADES

EQUINE GASTRIC ULCERS
RISKS & SIGNS

RISK FACTORS
- Changes to usual routine
- Intense training
- Stabled horses fed twice a day
- Low forage, concentrate rich diets
- Restricted grazing
- Travelling, especially over 4 hours without food
- Box weaning or early weaning
- Illness or surgery
- Sales preparation of yearlings
- Breeding (especially stallions)

WARNING SIGNS
- Poor performance
- Sour disposition
- Unsettled in training
- Unwilling to work
- Poor appetite
- Avoiding hard feed and preferring hay
- Dull coat
- Lethargy
- Colic, abdominal discomfort or “girthiness”
- Crib-biting or wind-sucking

GRADE 0 NORMAL MUCOSA
The epithelium is intact and there is no evidence of hyperkeratosis.

GRADE 1 INFLAMMATION
Ulcers have an intact mucosal epithelium, with areas of reddening and hyperkeratosis.

GRADE 2 EROSION
Small single or multiple ulcers.

GRADE 3 PROGRESSIVE ULCERATION
Large single or extensive superficial lesions.

GRADE 4 FULL ULCERATION
Extensive, often coalescing, lesions with areas of apparent deep ulceration.


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