

Lameness

Examination of a lame horse is the most common procedure undertaken at Clyde Veterinary Group Equine Hospital. Since the hospital opened in 2005, we have looked at several thousand lame horses, ponies and donkeys. The assessment undertaken follows the same pattern whether the horse is referred from another vet or is a first opinion patient.

Lameness Assessment

Observation of the horse's gait to determine which limb or limbs the horse is lame on: this usually involves the horse being trotted on a yard surface and then lunged on both soft and hard surfaces. Detailed clinical examination of the horse. Determine the site of pain: this may be evident on the initial examination however, very often requires the use of nerve or joint blocks to locate the source of pain. Imaging of the affected area (usually using radiography or ultrasonography). Occasionally, scintigraphy (bone scanning) is required. Arthroscopy of the joint to determine the extent of the joint damage may be recommended in some cases.

Treatment Options

There is an ever-increasing range of treatment options:

- Box rest
- Controlled exercise with or without physiotherapy
- Oral anti-inflammatory drugs
- Intra-articular (joint) medication, most commonly with steroids and/or hyaluronic acid
- Arthroscopy (Keyhole surgery of the joints)
- Irap therapy
- Tildren and Osphos
- Neutraceuticals (feed supplements)
- Stem cell therapy

After Care

If your horse has been referred from another vet, then a referral report will be sent to your vet and yourself within 7 days of your horse leaving the hospital. Unfortunately, not all horses respond to the prescribed treatment and other options may need to be considered. If the joint has received steroids, be vigilant looking for signs of laminitis and infection for the first 5 days. Please keep us updated with the horse's progress. If you have any concerns you can contact us at any time as there is always veterinary cover by at least 2 equine vets, 24 hours a day.

