

PREGNANCY IN THE MARE FACT SHEET

Great! My mare is pregnant- what are my responsibilities?

Look after her and give her lots of TLC!

- vaccinate as and when needed if necessary
 - Equine Herpes Virus- at 5, 7, 9 months
 - Influenza and tetanus- one month before foaling, plus the mares normal annual booster
- have her scanned at 14, 24 and 42 days post ovulation. It is your responsibility to book in these pregnancy checks if she is at home to ensure she does not have twins.
- organize insurance if you want to - pregnancy's can be insured in the event of loss.

Do I need to change her feeding during the pregnancy?

This depends on current bodyweight of mare. It is important to ensure she does not become obese as this will cause problems at birth. It is a good idea to encourage a balanced concentrate feed regime during the last trimester in order to ensure the fetus has all necessary nutrients for growth and development.

What are the changes that are happening inside her?

- 24 days the foetus has a heartbeat.
- 60 days you can tell the sex of the foetus.
- It then drops out of reach until day 100, at which point there is another window to tell the sex of the foetus.
- 120days it is the size of a small melon.
- 130days and beyond it is no longer possible to sex the foetus as it passes out of reach of rectal palpation.
- Most growth occurs during the last trimester.

How does the position of the foal change during pregnancy?

Once the foetus reaches 4 months old it drops down into the abdomen, over the pelvic brim. The baby usually lies on its back, with its head at the same end as the mother's head. At around 7 months, baby usually turns round, so that its head is at the mother's tail - but still lying on its back. As it is born it does a dolphin like movement, extending its front legs and turning so that its back is against the mother's spine, as it enters the birth canal.

Common Concerns

My mare is showing signs of season - she can't possibly be pregnant!

Mares are often very hormonal during pregnancy, and can show signs of teasing, and urinating to other mares, despite being pregnant.

My mare's tummy isn't growing at all?

Some maiden mares (especially those with a high level of fitness) show little sign of abdominal growth until a few months before foaling.

Is it safe to move my mare during pregnancy?

We don't recommend moving them in the first two months of pregnancy, or in the last month. Outside of those times, it is usually safe to move her, as long as transport times are kept short, and the mare is not stressed.

Mares in the following categories run higher risk of complications during pregnancy/birth

- Old
- Prone to laminitis, Cushings
- History of complications
- Fluid accumulating under belly prior to foaling
- Systemic infection

What else can cause mares to abort?

- EHV
- Other systemic infection
- Stress

If you have any concerns at all about your mare during pregnancy please call your vet.

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