

EVENTS

Centered Riding Clinic with Misti Summers

- May 25th
- Limited to 15 people
- \$75 day fee
- Must pre-register
- \$25 to audit only

EQUINE PROTOZOAL MYLOENCEPHALITIS (EPM)

EPM is considered to be the most common neurological disease in the United States and is caused most commonly by the protozoa *Sarcocystis neurona*. Approximately 50% of horses in the United States have been exposed to the disease and about 1% of horses develop clinical disease. Many horses are able to mount an immune response against EPM. It is a progressive disease that causes inflammation of the brain and spinal cord. The life cycle of *S. neurona* is dependant upon the opossum. A horse becomes infected by ingesting the protozoa in feed, hay, pasture or water contaminated with opossum feces. Some research has stated that the incubation period of EPM is a couple weeks up to two years, until outward symptoms appear. The sooner the disease is diagnosed and treated, the better the prognosis. Left untreated, the symptoms generally progress until the horse is recumbent, and most untreated cases end in death. EPM is not contagious between horses. Horses are more likely to develop disease from ingestion of the protozoa when they are more stressed (showing, pregnancy, illness, etc).

EPM may be difficult to diagnose in the early stages. Most often other diseases should be ruled out. Similar diseases may be wobblers, equine herpes disease, lyme disease, west nile virus, cushings, selenium deficiency, and lameness.

Clinical signs include:

- Ataxia (incoordination), ranging from mild to severe, depending on disease status
- Muscle atrophy
- Lameness, ranging from mild to severe
- Head tilting
- Recumbency (the inability to stand or rise)

Testing is done with cerebral spinal fluid (CSF) or blood serum. Testing CSF is technically difficult and must be performed by a teaching/referral hospital. False positives and negatives do occur. If the disease is in the early stages repeat testing may be needed to access antigen levels. Testing for various surface antigens to determine the presence of disease is the most common, but there are other types of test available.

Treatment varies. There are multiple medications and very widely on cost. Examples are Oroquin-10 (on trial), ReBalance, Protazil, and Marquis and price varies from approximately 80\$ per month to \$700 per month. Minimum treatment time is 10 days, up to several months. Anti-inflammatories are often prescribed to alleviate symptoms and prevent reaction as the parasite dies.

Prognosis is generally good if treated early. However up to 20% of horses may relapse.

Prevention methods (there is no vaccine available)

- Close feed room and containers
- Minimize feed spillage (for wild animals to access)
- Feed heat-treated grains (process kills infective sporocysts)
- Keep water tanks clean and fresh
- Regular veterinary care

Contact Information:

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Centered Riding Clinic With Mitzi Summers



Sponsored by Roaring Brook Veterinary Service

May 25th at Roaring Brook Equine Facility- Lowville, NY

- Morning Session 9-12
- Afternoon Session 1-4
- Cost \$75 per session (with horse) \$25 to audit
- Must pre-register (315-489-9790 or lindseypeck@hotmail.com)
- Current Coggins and rabies documentation required

Centered Riding is an innovative way of expressing the classical principles of riding, using body awareness, centering, and imagery. It encompasses all seats and styles of riding. It teaches a language that allows clearer communication between horse, rider, and instructor. Centered Riding was developed by Sally Swift, author of the best-selling book and videotapes, and is now taught by Centered Riding Instructors around the world. It is based on a knowledge of human and horse anatomy, balance, movement, and on understanding how the mind affects the body and how both affect the horse. It uses centering and grounding techniques from the oriental martial arts, along with body awareness, mental imagery and sports psychology. Through increasing body awareness, inhibiting old patterns, and replacing them with a more balanced, free, and coordinated use of self, both horse and rider can move more freely and comfortably, and develop their best performance.

The *Four Basics* of Centered Riding

- **Soft Eyes** - Encourage visual and physical awareness, better peripheral vision, and improved “feel.”
- **Breathing** - Using the diaphragm and breathing correctly for better posture, relaxation, and energy.
- **Balance or Building Blocks** - Aligns the riders body for improved balance, straightness, and ease of movement.
- **Centering** - Using the center of balance, movement and control, located deep in the body, gives quiet strength, harmony and power, as in the oriental martial arts.

These fundamentals, along with *clear intent* for effective control, direction and use of aids, and *grounding* for stability and balance, promote freedom of movement, confidence and harmony between horse and rider, and can help in solving many problems.

What are the Benefits of Centered Riding? Centered Riding teaches you how to help your body do what you need to do in order to ride well. Centered Riding techniques help promote suppleness, stability, and clearer aids, making riding more comfortable for both horse and rider. As you learn and experience the principles through your horse's motion and responses, you and your horse tune in to each other and work together in harmony. These techniques can increase confidence and enjoyment and release tension in horses and riders, making training easier. They also help people cope with old injuries or chronic conditions that cause pain during or after riding. Centered Riding is used successfully by riders and instructors of all ages, interests, and levels, from pleasure riders to international competitors, and in therapeutic riding. It can be applied to any type of horse or horsemanship. Most of all, it makes riding more enjoyable for horses and riders.

