



Suitable for equines prone to gastric ulcers as part of a balanced diet

How does the feed mark help me?

This BETA feed approval mark, developed by the trade association in consultation with the Veterinary Medicines Directorate, makes it much easier for you to select a suitable feed for your horse or pony if you're concerned about EGUS.

Please note that this BETA feed assurance scheme is to support the management of horses and ponies at risk from non-glandular ulcers. Please seek veterinary advice for the treatment and management of glandular ulcers.

A BETA GUIDE... to its feed approval mark for products suitable for horses and ponies prone to EGUS (equine gastric ulcer syndrome)



REDUCE STRESS

Stress can come in many forms and it is impossible to eliminate it completely, but there are some measures you can take that make a big difference to your horse. Try moving it to a quieter part of the yard if it gets upset by noise, turning it out with a companion and making sure all horses are fed at the same time. Provide as much turnout as possible where appropriate (not laminitics).



INCREASE FIBRE & CHEW TIME

Ad-lib access to hay, haylage and chopped fibre feed allows a horse to eat little and often, as nature intended. This encourages longer chew time, which in turn leads to an increase in saliva production, with its bicarbonate, which helps to neutralise acidity. Chopped fibres are ideally suited to older horses with dental issues or for those with RAO (recurrent airway obstruction), also known as COPD (chronic obstructive pulmonary disorder).

GET FEEDING RIGHT

- ✓ Keep meal sizes small and feed frequently.
- ✓ Provide ad-lib forage – never less than 1.5% of body weight. The quantity will vary according to the moisture content of the fibre being fed (haylage vs hay). If in doubt, contact one of the many feed company helplines for assistance in working out how much to feed.

- ✓ Increase forage intake for greater chewing time and increased saliva production.
- ✓ Ensure that water is available at all times.
- ✓ Feed fibre before intense exercise to help reduce the risk of acid splashing on non-glandular parts of the stomach.
- ✓ Avoid feeding straw as the sole forage source.

What are the signs I should look for?

Ulcers generally cause low-grade pain, so signs include poor performance, reduced appetite, some weight loss, resistance to girthing, a staring coat and irritable behaviour.

Diet and feed management are contributory factors to ulcers in the stomach's non-glandular area. Glandular ulcers do not tend to be influenced by dietary factors.

The feed assurance scheme currently has 19 approved feeds. Each has passed a stringent, three-stage application process overseen by an independent auditor. This includes an examination of ingredients, labelling and marketing claims, plus a laboratory analysis, repeated annually.

APPROVED PRODUCTS



None of the feeds claims to cure gastric ulcers, but there is strong evidence to show that, when they are used as part of a dietary management regime, there is a reduction in the incidence of EGUS.

How are gastric ulcers diagnosed?

They are diagnosed by a vet, who performs a gastroscopy. This involves inserting a 3m-long endoscope – 1cm in diameter – into the horse's stomach. The process is carried out while the horse is sedated after being fasted for several hours.

