# MHVP
# (845) 225-3100

# Joint Injections

WHAT THEY ARE AND WHY THEY ARE DONE

**November 2008**

## Seasonal Reminders

Go through your barn emergency kit and restock outdated or used-up supplies. Don't have a kit? Order one from us.

If you're traveling south for the winter remember to check for up-to-date Coggins tests and vaccinations.

If pulling shoes for the winter, do it before the ground freezes.

Consider allergy treatment for horses suffering from spring allergies. Starting off season has noticeably greater results.

Stumped for a holiday gift for your trainer, barn manager or groom? How about a Mid-Hudson Vet gift certificate for the perfect holiday thank–you.


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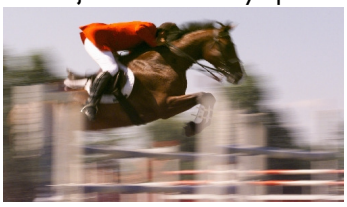
**What are joint injections, and why are they performed in the horse world? When are they indicated and what is used?** These are just a few of the questions that arise during discussions between horse owners and veterinarians. This newsletter will help to shed some light on the topic.

Joint injections, or intra-articular injections, are performed when a focused program of treatment is needed. Placing the anti-inflammatory and lubrication therapy directly in the location that needs it helps to minimize the dilution factor of giving oral medications like Bute or Banamine and injectable joint aids like Legend or Adequan. The oral medications and intravenous / intramuscular injectables are administered to the whole body (systemically) and we trust that they arrive at the most needy joint locations. Treating the joint directly helps to avoid the side effects of oral anti-inflammatories. It also eliminates the bi-weekly to monthly needle sticks. The benefits are obvious for horses whose stomachs are sensitive to bute, or horses who are needle-shy (or horse owners who are needle-shy, for that matter!). Joints that have evidence of arthritis on radiographs (x-rays), as well as joints that flex positive on a veterinary lameness exam are those that may have the best response to intra-articular treatment. Keep in mind that several joints can have symptoms



**The equine athlete can greatly benefit from "joint" injections**

of early arthritis at the same time (signs can include mild to moderate lameness and positive flexion tests) but no visible signs of bony changes on x-ray such as calcium deposits, or damaged bone. These joints may respond well to joint injections, as well.

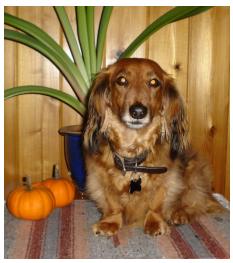
Many horses do well with injections on an "as needed" basis, while others who have a very consistent exercise program might be maintained on a semi-annual or annual regimen.

So, what is injected into the joint??? The goal of joint injections is focused anti-inflammatory therapy and increased lubrication for future activity/exercise. The medications used in the injections reflect this goal. A long-acting corticosteroid controls the inflammation and helps prevent damage to the bone. Hyaluronic acid, or sodium hyaluronate, is the main component of joint fluid. Injecting it directly provides both lubrication and anti-inflammatory properties. These two medications, together, provide a broad spectrum, yet focused, treatment plan. The cost of joint injections is very comparable to the cost of long-term bute or a regimen of Legend or Adequan. Discuss these options with your veterinarian at the next scheduled lameness screening.

## She's Back

*Aspen Enger, DVVM (daughter with veterinarian mother) has joined our practice on a part-time basis. On occasion Aspen can be found traveling with her mother, Dr. Jennifer Enger. Dr. Enger is back from maternity leave and is on the road again. We welcome Jenn back and congratulate her on her beautiful baby girl.*

## Welcome Back

## THE CORNER MAILBOX
## "Chester" Enger

"Chester" Enger is a 6 year old long-haired dachshund who manages the affairs of 2 other dachshunds and a 2 month old infant. As an ex-CFD (chief financial dachshund) of Goldman Sachs, "Chester" has vast experience in property management, with special focus on manure control and regulation. He suffers from obsessive-compulsive disorder with regard to tennis balls and crying infants, but his syndrome is well-managed with the help of a very supportive family.