

MID-HUDSON VETERINARY PRACTICE, P.C.

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THOSE MOODY MARES

What to do with those talented but oh-so-witchy mares

Has your horse had a dental evaluation in last 12 months? Call us today to set up an appointment with Dr. Michelle Singer.

We have information on dental health on our website. You can find it at www.midhudsonvet.net.



Mark Jordan, DVM
Matt Elliot, DVM
Jenn Enger, DVM
Michelle Singer, VMD
Emily Harrison, DVM

Any horse person that has ever fallen for a moody mare will tell you that behavior problems can be difficult to overcome. Mares can become very anxious, herd-bound, distracted and difficult to control when they are “in-season” or “in-heat”. These behaviors occur most often when mares are cycling (March to September) and can be very frustrating for owners to deal with, especially in the show ring. There are a few options for controlling problematic mare behavior. Treatment can focus on manipulating the estrous (heat) cycle or eliminating it entirely.

Herbal supplements such as “Moody Mare” and “Calm and Cool” are available and safe, but are not usually strong enough to elicit real behavioral changes. Owners should be aware of herbal supplements containing

valerian root as this herb will show up on drug tests performed at “rated” horse shows.

Regu-mate® (altrenogest) is a synthetic progesterone that is administered daily either orally or in the feed. Regu-mate® is available as liquid or paste but care must be taken to avoid getting this medication on one’s hands as it could disrupt a women’s cycle!

Depo-Provera® (m-progesterone) is an intramuscular injectable drug administered once every 4–5 weeks after a brief loading period. Allowing the mare to go through at least one heat cycle in the spring increases the drug’s effectiveness.

One of the newer options includes **progesterone-impregnated implants** that act as time-release treatments. These act to



suppress the heat cycle for up to 6 months at a time and are very affordable.

The most aggressive option for controlling hormonal behavior is an **ovariectomy**—removal of both ovaries. This surgery is now performed laparoscopically during a standing surgery in which the mare is awake but heavily sedated. There is a much shorter recuperation period after standing surgery compared to surgery where the mare is under general anesthesia. These mares tend to do very well.



Spring is just around the corner

March 20th is the first day of spring. If you haven’t already had your horses “spring” vaccinations done then it is time to get them started. Give us a call today to make an appointment and keep you horse up-to-date on his vaccines.

(845) 225-3100

394 Route 52, Carmel, New York 10512

www.midhudsonvet.net