



December, 2010

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**What's new at Foothill Mobile Veterinary Services?**

**Small animal services (for dogs and cats) now available:** vaccinations, heartworm testing, and in-home euthanasia.

**Routine appointments available in the early evening:** Routine appointments for large animals may be scheduled between 6 and 8 PM, for no extra charge, using our online appointment request link at [www.foothillmobilevet.com](http://www.foothillmobilevet.com) or by calling 530-622-0174.

**Medical Topic of the Month: Anaplasma phagocytophilum (aka Tick Fever, Granulocytic Ehrlichiosis):**

**General Information:** This disease is very common in northern California, especially in the foothills, during late fall, winter and early spring. It is a rickettsial disease caused by *Anaplasma phagocytophilum*. It is spread via a tick known as *Ixodes pacificus*, the common western black-legged tick. The disease is not contagious, but multiple cases may occur on the same premises.

**Clinical Presentation:** Signs include fever (102F-107F), depression, anorexia (off feed), ataxia (unstable standing and walking), limb edema (swollen/enlarged legs), reluctance to move and mucosal petechiae (small red spots on the gums). The good news is that neither laminitis (founder) nor abortions are an expected complication of this disease.

**Diagnosis:** It is important to distinguish this disease from other "look-alike" diseases by submitting a blood test for definitive diagnosis. Typical changes in your horses' blood chemistry will include the following: anemia (low red blood cells), leukopenia (low white cells), and thrombocytopenia (low platelets). The next step for definitive diagnosis is to submit a blood sample for testing specifically for this disease (PCR test at UC Davis).

**Treatment:** Fortunately, this disease carries an excellent prognosis if treated promptly with intravenous injections of Oxytetracycline once daily for 4 days and oral Doxycycline twice daily for 5 days for a total of 9 days of treatment.

**Prevention:** Because *Anaplasma* is transmitted by ticks, tick repellent and frequent examination and removal of ticks is the only preventative measure. There is currently no vaccine available. Horses may carry immunity from 2 months to 20 months after infection.

Resources: Equine Emergencies: Orsini and Divers. Equine Internal Medicine: Reed, Bayly and Sellon.

**REMEMBER:** We have scheduled our first annual **Equine Vaccination and Microchip Clinic for March 20<sup>th</sup> 2011 at the El Dorado County Fairgrounds.** Please visit our website for further information:

[www.foothillmobilevet.com](http://www.foothillmobilevet.com)

**As always, we look forward to working with you to optimize the health of your horse. Please call (530) 622-0174 for routine and emergency care of your horse, camelid or small ruminant**

