

Gastric Ulcer Control Program



Up to **90%** of performance horses have gastric ulcers.
Does yours?

Gastric Ulcer Control Program



What is equine squamous gastric ulcer syndrome (ESGUS)?

Equine squamous gastric ulcer syndrome (ESGUS)* is a significant welfare issue that affects the health and well-being of many horses.

The development of ulcers in the squamous (upper) portion of the stomach is directly related to the amount of training. The more intense the training, the more likely the horse is to develop ulcers. These ulcers are extremely common: up to 90 per cent of performance horses have gastric ulcers. Even in non-performance animals — such as brood mares and pleasure horses — the percentage is very high (60 to 80 per cent).

Clinical signs of ESGUS can be hard to identify. Many horses may show no signs or mild signs such as poor performance, a change in attitude or behaviour, weight loss or poor condition. Some horses may experience recurrent colic especially in association with activities such as feeding.

It's important to realize that while many horses do not show signs of pain, gastric ulcers are associated with discomfort and warrant treatment.

The only way to definitively diagnose gastric ulcers is by endoscopic examination (gastroscopy). During this procedure, a veterinarian passes a tiny camera into the horse's stomach through its nostrils so the stomach lining can be observed.

* The gastric ulcer control program is only applicable to horses that are diagnosed with equine squamous gastric ulcer syndrome (ESGUS). Horses that are diagnosed with equine glandular gastric ulcer syndrome (EGGUS), a more severe gastric condition, are not eligible for this program.

What is the gastric ulcer control program?

The WCVM Veterinary Medical Centre and Merial Canada have launched the Gastric Ulcer Control Program in partnership with the Saskatchewan Horse Federation (SHF) — your provincial sport organization. Through this initiative, SHF members are eligible for clinical services that target ESGUS in horses. Here's how the program works:

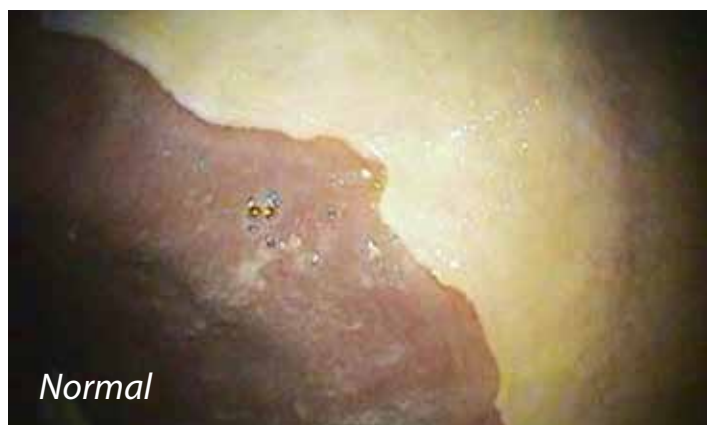
- If you wish to enrol your horse in the program, please contact the WCVM Veterinary Medical Centre (see back cover for details). You must be an SHF member to participate in the gastric ulcer-free program. Enrolment in this program represents a substantial discount compared to the regular fees at the Veterinary Medical Centre.
- A WCVM Veterinary Medical Centre representative will complete the booking for the initial equine gastroscopy and evaluation. All costs associated with program enrolment will be discussed at that time.

What should I expect?

- The afternoon before the scheduled gastroscopy, your horse will be admitted to the WCVM Veterinary Medical Centre. The VMC requires early admittance to ensure that your horse is properly fasted before the diagnostic procedure.
- During your horse's overnight stay in the equine ward, it will not receive any feed for approximately 12 hours before the gastroscopy. Your horse's water will also be withdrawn two hours before the procedure.
- Members of the VMC Large Animal Internal Medicine service will conduct a complete physical examination of your horse before its gastroscopy.
- Once the procedure is done, your horse will be discharged and you will receive a medical report describing the clinical team's findings.



Multiple squamous ulcers



Normal

What happens if my horse is diagnosed with ESGUS?

If your horse is diagnosed with ESGUS, here are the program's steps:

- Your horse will receive a 28-day treatment of Gastrogard®, the only product approved by Health Canada for treating equine gastric ulcers.
- After the initial treatment, board-certified internal medicine specialists at the WCVM Veterinary Medical Centre will conduct a second gastroscopy on your horse.
- If your horse's gastric ulcers have not resolved after the first treatment, Merial Canada will provide another 28-day treatment of Gastrogard®. The company will also cover the cost of a third gastroscopic procedure to determine if your horse's gastric ulcers have resolved.



How much will I pay?

Thanks to the support of Merial Canada, the program's cost for horse owners is substantially subsidized. Enrolment in this program represents a significant discount compared to the regular fees at the WCVM Veterinary Medical Centre. Please contact the VMC Large Animal Internal Medicine Service for complete details on enrolment fees.

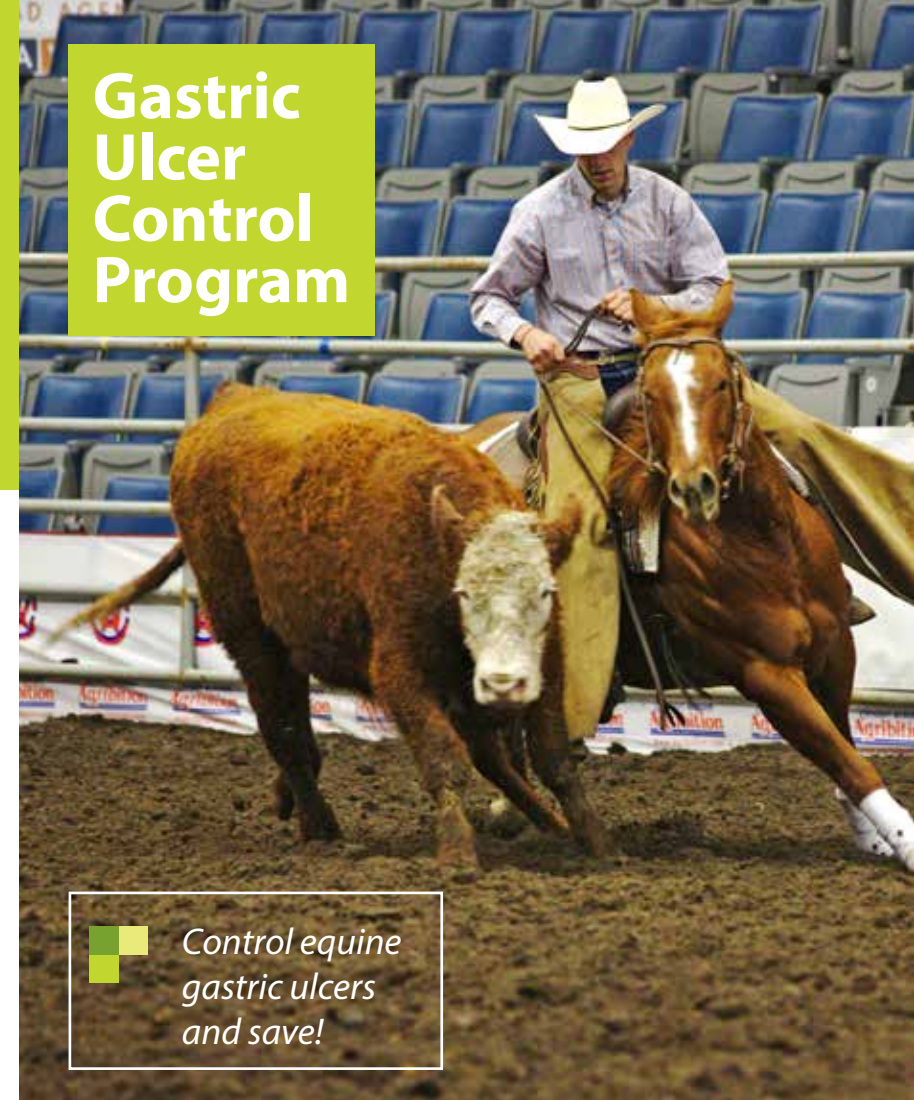
Enrolment includes:

- Initial gastroscopy
- Physical examination
- One-night stay in hospital
- Sedation
- 28-day treatment of Gastrogard® (special discounted VMC price for program participants)
- Follow-up gastroscopy (after treatment)

Additional support from Merial Canada

Any horse that still has squamous gastric ulcers after the initial 28-day treatment of Gastrogard® will receive an additional 28 days of treatment and a third gastroscopy after the second treatment — courtesy of Merial Canada.

Gastric Ulcer Control Program



Control equine gastric ulcers and save!

To register for the program, please contact:

Large Animal Internal
Medicine Service

WCVM Veterinary Medical Centre

306-966-7178 | vmccorrespond@usask.ca