



# MONTANA EQUINE

## MEDICAL AND SURGICAL CENTER

PETER HEIDMANN, DVM DACVIM  
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AL FLINT, DVM PHD

NewYears, 2008  
Greetings!

Once again, it seems that there is lots to share with you. From our clinic's move to Logan, to the new techniques and procedures we now offer at Montana Equine, it has been a busy year. 2008 doesn't look to be much different. Like those of you who have been in to see us at the new clinic, we are very happy with the expanded hospital and location. Following the grueling move, we are all looking forward to settling-in long-term in Logan. Through it all, we are extremely appreciative of the trust you've placed in us as your equine veterinarians. Our mission is to constantly improve the veterinary care we offer to you and your horses, including not just advanced, progressive medicine and surgery, but also the little things, the small details which contribute to successful patient outcomes.

With each of our veterinarians focused on their discrete areas of emphasis, we have also been able to tap into many recent advances in equine medicine and surgery. There are so many new and exciting developments in veterinary medicine these days that it takes this sort of focus to keep abreast of the art and science of caring for your animals. For example, we now perform joint and tendon injections with IRAP (Interleukin-1 Receptor Antagonist Protein). This medication lacks some of the negative consequences of other types of joint medications, and works by isolating a powerful anti-inflammatory *from each patient's own bloodstream*. This protein, which is prepared on-site at our clinic, has balanced physiologic and anti-inflammatory effects, so it is appropriate for treating many types of arthritis and inflammation in tendon sheaths. Ask us whether IRAP might make sense for your horse.

Our commitment to continuous advancement does not stop with high technology, but also extends to our team of

veterinarians. With a Masters Degree in Reproductive Physiology, and a PhD in Cellular Biology, as well as a strong interest in advanced reproductive procedures, Dr. Al Flint is perfectly prepared to assume an ever-larger portion of our reproductive medicine caseload this year. Besides allowing me to focus more on the internal medicine cases, Dr. Flint's background and contributions mean that our reproductive capabilities will actually be strengthened, so that we can continue to provide you with the very best in routine and advanced reproductive care. Dr. Flint is well-versed in all facets of reproductive care, including routine breeding (live and AI), stallion collection, cooling and freezing semen for shipment, and embryo transfer procedures. We have also worked hard in the off-season to build our herd of young, healthy (and well-mannered!) recipient mares, so we have plenty of recipient options for those of you interested pursuing embryo transfer for your mares. In addition, Montana Equine will tap the skills of Dr. Shannon Moreaux in managing some of the challenging reproductive medicine cases. Dr. Moreaux, who teaches equine reproduction at MSU, and who has extensive clinical expertise in reproduction, will also continue to serve in his existing role as emergency veterinarian and anesthesiologist.

And finally, as part of our commitment to continuing education, Montana Equine is very pleased to announce that the next event in our ongoing lecture series will be on Saturday, February 23<sup>rd</sup>, with presentations on Equine Neurologic Disease, Pain Management, and Equine Neonatology. Our featured guest speaker is Dr. John Schlipf, who many of you may remember from his days working with Dr. Catlin at E.V.A. Dr. Schlipf is an expert in equine internal medicine; he returned to academia in 1999 and is now faculty at the Oregon State Teaching Hospital. As always, these lectures are open to the public, and veterinarians.

In this newsletter, Drs. Flint and Latson share some of their knowledge about acupuncture and arthroscopic surgery, respectively. For more information about these subjects, or any other equine veterinary topics, please feel free to reach us at the clinic, or via email at [www.montanaequine.com](http://www.montanaequine.com). We truly enjoy being a resource, and enjoy being challenged by your excellent questions.

Please feel free to contact us with questions or suggestions for additional topics in future newsletters. Thanks again for your continued support. We all wish you and your families a happy and healthy 2008.

Peter

**OUR SPECIALIST DOCTORS  
ARE ALWAYS ON-CALL**

**406-285-0123**

### Equine Acupuncture

Dr. Al Flint

Acupuncture is used to treat a variety of medical problems from musculoskeletal injuries, to some respiratory ailments and medical (non-surgical) colic. But what is acupuncture? Does it even work? If so, how?

Acupuncture is the medical practice of inserting sterile needles into precise anatomical locations in order to stimulate the body's natural healing processes. This method of therapy has been used for thousands of years both in human and animal therapy. The western veterinary community has recently begun to embrace the use of acupuncture to help reduce the use of drugs, to aid in the healing, and to help relieve pain. Acupuncture is known to effect blood circulation, immune response, and nerve function. Increasingly, clients report significant improvement in levels of comfort following a course of acupuncture treatment.

**MONTANA EQUINE**  
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*Exclusively Dedicated to the Highest Quality Care of Horses*

#### **Acupuncture contd.**

While many people have described acupuncture as channeling the movement of energy (Qi), many acupuncture points are based on anatomy of nerves and vessels. Today, traditional acupuncture points and channels are stimulated along with known neurologic pathways to treat dysfunctional regions of the body (Robinson). Although scientific knowledge is still evolving, acupuncture is believed to work via one or more of the following mechanisms: By inserting a needle into an acupuncture point, microcellular damage is caused stimulating bloodflow to the area. The increase in blood flow, often seen as a slightly raised, warm area surrounding the needle site, may actually be providing beneficial cytokines and nutrients to healing tissues, while removing toxins from the affected area. Acupuncture is also understood to act by stimulating an area of decreased nerve activity, potentially improving digestive motility, or over improving sensation in the extremities of neurologic patients by stimulating precise nerve bundles. Finally, acupuncture needles may anatomically block the fibers that create chronic pain, while also releasing endorphins, stimulating a general feeling of well-being. For more information about the modern uses of this ancient treatment, please follow the link to veterinary acupuncture on our website [www.montanaequine.com](http://www.montanaequine.com), or ask Dr. Flint about the application of this exciting non-traditional therapy.

*Montana Equine  
offers a 15% Discount  
on Routine Dentals  
November through March*  
**MOST HORSES BENEFIT FROM  
A DENTAL FLOAT EVERY YEAR!**

#### **Equine Arthroscopy**

Dr. Keith Latson

Joint surgery has been revolutionized since equine arthroscopy was first described in the German literature in 1973. This type of minimally invasive, 'key hole surgery', has resulted in shorter recoveries and better outcomes in all types of horses.

Arthroscopy was initially used only for chip fracture removal from fetlock and carpal (aka "knee") joints in racehorses. With much more intensive academic and technical training of veterinary surgeons over the past 25 years, as well as improved technology and techniques, the use of arthroscopy has advanced to include reduction of fractures within joints, treatment of tendon tears within tendon sheaths, and diagnosis of joint/tendon injuries that would otherwise only be visible with advanced imaging, such as MRI. Though less commonly performed, even the hip, elbow and temporomandibular (jaw) joints can be accessed arthroscopically. Arthroscopy has also become the standard of care for treatment of osteochondrosis desiccans, or OCD. This developmental disorder is often apparent on x-rays in affected weanlings, but may not cause lameness or excess fluid in joints until a horse begins training. Removal of the cartilage-covered bone fragments is achieved through tiny portals, each less than a half-inch long. Tendon modifying procedures that would have required large incisions and long recovery times have recently been replaced by less invasive tenoscopic procedures.

In addition to planned procedures, we also use arthroscopy to treat joint, tendon sheath and bursal injuries and infections.

Sadly, these types of injuries are relatively common, and can potentially have a fatal outcome. When diagnosed and treated early and aggressively using modern arthroscopic lavage, antibiotic bead implantation or regional limb perfusion, outcomes for horses with infected joint or tendon structures have improved significantly.

Over the past 35 years, the use of arthroscopy in equine surgery has been shown again and again to produce exceptional results. A large and growing body of research substantiates improved surgical and performance outcomes in large groups of equine patients, leading arthroscopy to become one of the most commonly-performed procedures in performance horses. While this form of surgery is technically demanding and requires advanced specialty training, it is less traumatic, producing better cosmetic and functional outcomes. In our hospital, arthroscopies are performed routinely, with a high degree of success. Please feel free to contact us to discuss the applications of the art and science of arthroscopy.

**Montana Equine presents:**  
**EQUINE VETERINARY**  
**LECTURE SERIES**  
**Saturday, February 23<sup>rd</sup>**

**Dr. John Schlipf DVM DACVIM**  
(Asst. Professor, Oregon State University)  
**10-11:30 am: Neurologic Diseases**  
**1-2 pm: Pain and Anesthesia**  
**2-3 pm: Pain Management**

**Dr. Peter Heidmann DVM DACVIM**  
(Head of Medicine, Montana Equine)  
**3-4 pm: Equine Neonatology**