



Equine Gastric Ulcer Syndrome (EGUS) Management Guidelines

- **Diagnosis**
 - Clinical Signs: lack of energy, weight loss, dull coat, poor performance, colic, negative changes in attitude, poor appetite, abdominal discomfort while girthing
 - The only way to definitively diagnose EGUS is through gastroscopy. Horses are fasted overnight and then a gastroscope (similar to a nasogastric tube with a camera) is passed to visualize the stomach
 - Gastric ulcers are graded from 0-3, with 0 being healthy, nonulcerated stomach lining and 3 being deep ulceration and bleeding
- **Treatment**
 - The gold standard treatment is Gastrogard (omeprazole), a paste that inhibits a portion of the stomach that produces stomach acid. The horse's stomach is able to produce enough acid to break down food but not the excess acid that produces ulcers
 - Another treatment is ranitidine and sucralfate tablets that also decrease the amount of gastric acid
 - "Generic" Gastrogard or omeprazole is an illegally manufactured product. Many studies have shown that these products also do not have the reported amount of stable medication, so your horse is likely getting an ineffective dose
- **Management**
 - Diet
 - Provide as much turnout as possible
 - Always give constant access to forage. Utilizing slow feed hay nets is a great way to decrease the amount of time used to consume the forage.
 - Feed pelleted feeds instead of sweet feed as it can be irritating
 - Add alfalfa hay – the calcium acts as a buffer to decrease the acidity of the stomach
 - Preventives
 - Ulcergard around stressful times (1 dose of ulcergard is equivalent to ¼ tube of Gastrogard)
 - Platinum performance gastric support
 - Neigh lox
 - Environment
 - Reduce stress as much as possible by maintaining a routine