

Caslicks

This procedure still causes controversy today.

The mare's vulva is designed to be an airtight seal to the vagina. As mares get older, have more foals or just aren't very fit, their abdominal wall slackens. This means the abdominal contents, the guts, drop. Since the rectum and anus are attached to the guts, they get pulled forward, over the pelvis, which obviously can't move. Since the vulva is also attached to the rectum, it too, moves upwards. In the original plans, the top of the vulva was supposed to be level with the brim of the pelvis. This situation allows the air-tight seal to work. However, if the vulva is pulled upwards, as described above, then the portion raised above the level of the pelvic brim, no longer acts as a seal and allows air into the vagina. Unfortunately air entering the vagina also brings bacteria with it. Bacteria in the vagina also get onto the cervix and when the cervix opens i.e. when the mare is in season, the bacteria can get into the uterus.

To correct this abnormality, we can perform a Caslicks Operation. This means stitching the portion of the vulva that sits above the pelvic brim and returning the rest of the vulva to an air-tight seal. Once stitched, the skin edges heal and the actual suture material can be removed but if the mare is in foal, she will need to have the stitched portion re-opened just prior to foaling. Because the opened portion will be allowing the passage of air (and bacteria) again into the vagina, the re-opening wants to be done as close as possible to foaling and it wants repairing as soon as possible after foaling, preferably the next morning.

We do offer a scheme or all-in-one fee for insemination with either Frozen or Chilled AI for mares coming into the clinic. There are certain criteria that need to be satisfied for your mare to qualify for the scheme package, and those criteria vary according to the type of semen insemination being used. To check if your mare qualifies for the scheme you will need to ring the clinic and speak to one of the stud vets. Even if your mare doesn't qualify for the scheme, we will still accept her for any form of semen insemination but all procedures will be charged on an individual basis.

For our current prices for the scheme packages, please contact the Equine Department.