



How to prepare for your horse's gastroscopy procedure



In order to achieve a good view of the stomach so that we can assess any ulcers that may be present, your horse will need to be starved from the previous evening.

Your horse will need to have his food taken out 12 hours before the procedure, and will need to be bedded on non-edible bedding or muzzled to prevent him from eating any bedding.

To perform the gastroscopy, your horse will be placed in stocks and receive some sedation.

The scope will then be passed up his nose and into the stomach. Air is used to inflate the stomach in order to get a good view of any ulcers.

Each horse will vary within the number and severity of ulcers that are present. Ulcers are typically given a grade, depending on their size and severity:

- Grade 0: Stomach lining intact and no appearance of reddening
- Grade 1: Stomach lining intact but there are areas of reddening
- Grade 2: Stomach has small single or multiple ulcers
- Grade 3: Stomach has large single or multiple ulcers
- Grade 4: Stomach has extensive ulcers; often merge to give areas of deep ulceration

The stomach is then deflated and the scope removed. Your horse should be able to return home the same day.

Once a diagnosis of equine gastric ulcer syndrome has been made, a treatment plan will be discussed between you and the vet. This usually involves a combination of medications and management changes.

After 4-8 weeks, we would like to re-scope your horse in order to assess his response to treatment and make any changes that may be necessary. Whilst some cases will completely resolve in this time, others may take longer and require more repeat scoping.

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact us.