

Foaling

*“I’m having a baby (foal)..
now what do I do?”*

It’s foaling season again, and time to remind all the expecting ‘parents’ of some important things.

Preparing for the Blessed Event

1. A 5-way vaccination booster should be given to mare 4-6 weeks prior to foaling to increase colostrum IgG levels.
2. Try to avoid deworming the mare during the last 6 weeks of pregnancy.
3. Just prior to foaling, wash the mare’s udder with a mild soap and water - and make sure to rinse well.

Your Role in the Foaling Process

1. MOST IMPORTANTLY, keep quiet and stay outside of the stall if everything is okay. Give the mare and foal some privacy.
2. IF a white membrane is covering the foal’s nostrils after it is born, remove it from his muzzle so that he can breathe.
3. DIP the newborn’s

umbilical cord stump in tincture of iodine.

4. Remove the placenta from the stall and SAVE IT in a bucket (out of reach of chewing dogs or cats).

When To Call Us

1. If Stage II - ACTIVE labor has continued for more than 15 minutes and no foal is seen or there is no progression in the foal’s delivery.
2. Placental membranes have not been expelled within 4 hours after foaling.
3. Abnormal or absent milk production by the mare.
4. The foal is not nursing properly or at all. (Please save all exciting but normal foaling stories for when the office is open)

Veterinary Examination

We should examine the mare and newborn foal within the first few days of life.

The mare, foal and placenta are examined for any abnormalities or problems. The foal should receive a tetanus

vaccination, vitamin E - Selenium injection, and an enema.

Immunoglobulin levels should be checked by a blood test at approximately 18 hours of age since foals only receive immunity (antibodies to fight infections) from the mare’s colostrum and not in-utero.

Seeing a foal nurse does not necessarily mean it received adequate immunity!!!

Post-Foaling Reminders

1. Deworm mare one week after foaling with Panacur.
2. Deworm foal at one week of age and EVERY 4 weeks thereafter until 10 months of age with a MILD dewormer (i.e. Panacur).
3. Vaccinate foal: 8 & 12 wks of age.
4. Most foals will get a harmless case of scours during the mare’s “foal heat” around 9 days post-foaling. If the foal continues to nurse and act normal, there is little reason for concern. 30cc’s of Pepto-Bismol liquid orally, twice a day for 3-4 days may lessen the severity of the scours (diarrhea).
5. Please call if you have questions or concerns, foals are much more fragile than adult horses!

