

PRESS RELEASE

Tharos' EquiNectar® Demonstrates Promising Results in Managing Equine Gastrointestinal Diseases

Edinburgh, 12th July 2024 – Tharos Ltd, the innovative company behind EquiNectar®, is excited to announce the promising results of a recent field study on the use of enzyme-rich malt extract in managing gastrointestinal diseases in horses. These findings were presented at the prestigious BEVA Colic Symposium, held from 10th to 12th July 2024, in Edinburgh. The BEVA Colic Symposium is renowned for bringing together the world's leading equine veterinarians and researchers to share the latest advancements and research in equine gastrointestinal health.

The study, titled "The Use of Enzyme-Rich Malt Extract as an Adjunct to the Management of Gastrointestinal Disease in Horses," was conducted by a team of prominent equine gastroenterology experts. It focused on evaluating the efficacy of EquiNectar® in treating horses with various gastrointestinal conditions, including recurrent abdominal pain, chronic diarrhoea, and refractory glandular disease. The study involved a diverse group of 34 horses, including Irish Draught crosses, Cob crosses, Warmbloods, Thoroughbreds, and Shetland ponies, ensuring a comprehensive assessment across different breeds and conditions. This research was carried out at the Defence Animal Training Regiment, at Melton Mowbray.

The results of the study were highly encouraging, showing significant improvement in 82% of the horses treated with EquiNectar®. Notably, clinical signs resolved in 47% of the cases, highlighting the potential of this innovative supplement to provide substantial relief for horses suffering from debilitating gastrointestinal issues. Horses in the study received a standard protocol of EquiNectar® over two months, with marked improvements observed in conditions such as recurrent abdominal pain, excessive faecal water, and refractory glandular disease.

Dr Mark Bowen who served as a consultant to Tharos during this process said, "The results of this field data provide new avenues for the treatment of complex conditions, many of which do not respond well to traditional medical therapy. However, what is fascinating is the insight that these results provide into the mechanisms of disease, especially medication resistant gastric glandular disease, suggesting either a direct impact of carbohydrates within the stomach, or a link between the microbiome and gastric inflammation. More work is needed to unravel this surprising outcome."

It is important to note that EquiNectar® is not licensed as a treatment but as a digestive supplement for horses. The decision to use it as part of the treatment protocol was made by the veterinarians based on its unique properties.

EquiNectar® claims to:

- Improve nutrition by facilitating better digestion of feed and forage through its blend of naturally occurring digestive enzymes
- Optimise the gut microbiome
- Improve the overall condition of the horses

The successful outcomes of this study underscore the importance of innovative approaches in veterinary medicine and demonstrate the potential of EquiNectar® as a valuable tool in managing equine gastrointestinal health. This research was a collaborative effort involving experts from Pool House Equine Hospital, End Cottage Vets, the Royal Army Veterinary Corps, and Medicine Vet Equine Referrals, and was funded by the IVC Evidensia Research Fund.

About Tharos Ltd: Tharos is dedicated to improving animal gut health and wellbeing through effective nutrition and optimising the gut microbiome. Driven by research and scientific innovation, Tharos has developed a range of products including EquiNectar for horses, AviNectar for poultry, and CaniNectar for dogs, which is currently on trial with the UK Border Force. The company was founded based on pioneering research by Professor John Hunter and Dr Rosemary Waring, who identified enzyme-rich malt extract as a potential solution to some common digestive problems in horses.

About the Royal Army Veterinary Corps: The Royal Army Veterinary Corps provides veterinary support to the British Army. It specialises in the care and management of military working animals and contributes to the Army's operational capability.

About the Defence Animal Training Regiment: The Defence Animal Training Regiment (DATR) is responsible for the training of military working animals and their handlers. DATR plays a critical role in preparing animals for operational duties and ensuring high standards of animal care and welfare.

About IVC Evidensia: IVC Evidensia is one of the largest and most progressive veterinary groups in Europe, providing exceptional care to animals through a network of over 1,500 clinics and hospitals. They focus on clinical excellence, education, and research to advance veterinary practice.

About the Researchers:

- **Gayle Hallowell:** Professor Hallowell is a lead veterinarian in equine gastroenterology. Her extensive research and publications have significantly advanced the understanding of equine digestive health. She is known for her dedication to veterinary education and clinical practice.
- **Carolyn Bates:** Major Bates is an experienced army veterinarian who has contributed extensively to veterinary science through her work with the Royal Army Veterinary Corps. Her expertise in equine health is highly regarded.
- **Emma Peal:** Captain Peal is a dedicated army vet known for her commitment to animal welfare and veterinary excellence. She plays a vital role in the Royal Army Veterinary Corps.
- **Harriet Telfer:** As Officer Commanding Veterinary Training Squadron, Major Telfer plays a crucial role in training military veterinary personnel and ensuring high standards of care.
- **Giulia Rapezzano:** Veterinary Surgeon at Pool House Equine Vets, Giulia Rapezzano brings valuable clinical expertise to the study, contributing significantly to its success.
- **Regina Pereira:** Veterinary Surgeon at Pool House Equine Vets, Regina Pereira is recognised for her contributions to equine veterinary medicine and her dedication to advancing animal health.
- **Mark Bowen:** Dr Bowen is a leading figure in veterinary education and practice. Known for his extensive work in equine medicine, he has significantly contributed to the field through his research and clinical practice.

About the BEVA Colic Symposium: The BEVA Colic Symposium, held every four years, is a premier event for equine veterinarians, showcasing the latest research and advancements in the treatment and prevention of colic. Hosted alternately by BEVA and the American Association of Equine Practitioners (AAEP), it brings together leading international experts in equine gastroenterology.

For more information, please contact:

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Additional Details:

- **Professor John Hunter:** [Biography and notable work](#)
- **Dr Rosemary Waring:** [Biography and notable work](#)
- **Gayle Hallowell:** [Biography and notable work](#)
- **Dr Mark Bowen:** [Biography and notable work](#)

The use of enzyme rich malt extract (ERME) as an adjunct to the management of gastrointestinal disease in horses

G. Hallowell¹, C Bates², E Peal³, H Telfer³, G Rapezzano¹, R Pereira¹, I M Bowen⁴

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BACKGROUND

- Microbiome changes occur with gastrointestinal disease and this change may be cause or effect
- Enzyme rich malt extract (ERME - Avinectar®, Equinectar®, Juvia®) is a by-product of the malting process when barley is dried
 - Not the same as malt extract
- ERME contains amylase, fructinase and gluconase and is an energy and B vitamin source
- Shown in chickens and cattle to improve energy conversion
- Used as an adjunct and during remission in humans with inflammatory bowel disease
 - Reduces constipation and bloat improving quality of life
 - Reduces amount of prescribed immuno-suppressive agents
 - Reduces flare-ups when taken daily
- In horses, changes the microbiome¹ and increases faecal pH in racehorses in training after administration for 2 weeks.²
- As in other species, ERME may increase carbohydrate digestion in the small intestine reducing amount reaching the large intestine, which may impact on bacterial fermentation.

OBJECTIVES

Investigate the efficacy of ERME in horses with gastro-intestinal disease



REFERENCES

1. <https://equinectar.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/EquiNectar-by-Tharos-Ltd-1.pdf>
2. Bowen, M.; Jones, T.; Nedas, B.; Waring, R. Short Communication: Can Faecal pH Document Changes in the Intestinal Metabolome of Horses Receiving Enzyme Rich Malt Extract Feed Supplementation. *Preprints* **2023**, 2023070537. <https://doi.org/10.20944/preprints202307.0537.v1>

FUNDING

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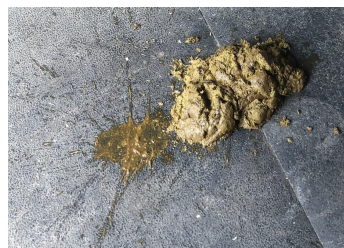


MATERIALS AND METHODS

- Retrospective study
- Horses received standard Equinectar® protocol and follow-up over 2 months
- Disease definitions for inclusion:
 - Recurrent abdominal pain definition: >3 episodes in 3 months
 - Chronic diarrhoea definition: >2 weeks
 - Excess faecal water: Water alongside soft or formed faecal balls
 - Refractory glandular disease: no change or worsening >3 months on at least two different treatments
- Loading dose (Equinectar® for 4 weeks) as per manufacturer and then halved for a further 4 weeks
- Age determined for normality and displayed as mean ± standard deviation
- Remaining data presented as % and differences
- Responses evaluated using Fisher's exact test

KEY RESULTS

82% horses showed improvement and in 47% signs resolved



RESULTS

- 34 horses
- Mean age: 14 ± 5.3 years
- 56% geldings; 41% mares; 3% stallions
- Majority: Irish Draught X (41%) or Cob crosses (32%)
- Other breeds: Warmbloods (15%), Thoroughbreds (6%), Shetland ponies (6%)
- Presenting signs:
 - Recurrent abdominal pain (32%)
 - Excess faecal water (26%)
 - Chronic diarrhoea (15%)
 - Refractory EGGD (15%)
 - Weight loss (12%)
- 42% only received Equinectar® and dietary change (100% excess faecal water; 33% recurrent abdominal pain and 50% refractory EGGD)
- 58% continued previous treatments (steroids, paracetamol and codeine) plus Equinectar® and dietary change
- In animals that improved, median time was 4(2-5) weeks
- 55% continued Equinectar® at owners' request beyond 8 weeks
- 32% stopped Equinectar® at 8 weeks and signs returned
- Cases with recurrent abdominal pain, excessive faecal water and refractory EGGD were most likely to improve (p=0.02)

CONCLUSIONS

- As part of a therapeutic protocol, Equinectar® may improve or resolve clinical signs in horses with recurrent abdominal pain, excessive faecal water and refractory EGGD
- Many horses responded to this supplement when they had not responded to conventional therapeutic management or saw signs return on cessation of the supplement.
- Small and heterogenous population – demonstrates promise and warrants further investigation.

