

## Horse News and Views



Recent experience with an umbilical hernia in a foal emphasizes “practice what you preach.” For the first three months of a foal’s life, I watched a two-finger-wide umbilical hernia in the hope that it would heal on its own. In frustration and curbing the surgeon in me, I finally decided to give the Elastoplast tape method a try. Four-inch wide Elastoplast was used to encircle the mid abdomen to push the contents of the hernial sac back into the abdomen. The bandage was reinforced or replaced as needed. To my surprise, the hernia had closed down to a one-finger defect in two weeks. After a further two weeks of bandaging, the hernia was healed. The downside of the successful treatment was the comment from family members, “Why didn’t you do it sooner?”

Black walnut shavings are well known to cause founder (laminitis) in horses. Within a few hours of being bedded on bedding containing as little as 20% black walnut shavings, horses will exhibit signs of founder. However, there have been no documented cases where horses have developed laminitis from contact with black walnut trees, nuts or leaves. While visiting a veterinarian in Illinois, a pony pastured on a very poor dried-out pasture was diagnosed with very severe laminitis. There was no access to lush grass, grain or other high-carbohydrate source. However, the pasture contained three black walnut trees. The only signs of fallen fruit or leaves were the hard pits on the ground. In this situation, it was postulated that the pony had eaten some of the green walnut hulls and/or the leaves. Horse owners are reminded of the danger particularly of black walnut shavings and possibly, in a situation where feed is limited, of other parts of the tree.

For further information contact Dr. Bob Wright (519) 846-3412 or visit our website: <http://www.gov.on.ca/omaf/english/livestock>



Ontario Association  
of  
Equine Practitioners

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**NOTE:** If you are adding the snippets of information to a previously established template, the name of the Ministry has changed to **Ministry of Agriculture and Food** and our new website address is [www.gov.on.ca/omaf/english/livestock](http://www.gov.on.ca/omaf/english/livestock)

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