

Sarcoid Treatment at the Ballarat Veterinary Practice

Sarcoids are a well known skin cancer of horses that have a high rate of returning after conventional surgery to remove them. Here at the practice we have several additional treatment options to help reduce the return of sarcoids to your horses skin. In some cases only one of the below methods will be advised but frequently a combination of techniques is required to give your horse the best opportunity for the sarcoid not returning.



LASER SURGERY

The use of laser removal is some times recommended depending on the type and location of the sarcoid.

CHEMOTHERPAY

1. CISPLATIN BEADS

Cisplatin therapy is recommended to reduce regrowth as the drug kills cancer cells that are spread around the main lump and “invisible” to the surgeon. The beads last for 30 days and mean there is continual high drug levels for a long period of time. Commonly the beads are placed standing using local anaesthetic. The recommendation is to place the beads in and around the cancer 3 times 30 days apart. **The pictures above are a horse after cisplatin bead treatment**

2. CISPLATIN INJECTION

Cisplatin injections directly into and around the cancer last for between 24- 48 hours. Use of cisplatin injection is often avoided around the eye but can be used in all other areas of the body. The common way cisplatin injection is used is 3 injections 2 weeks apart, the first usually occurring at the time of surgery to remove the lump.

3. TOPICAL 5 – FLUOROURACIL

In some cases application of this ointment on a daily basis can resolve a small sarcoid, The cream must be applied daily and should not be able to come in contact with the eye or mucus membranes of the horse. Often the tip of the ear can be treated with this ointment.

ELECTROCHEMOTHERAPY (ECT)

ECT is a unique therapy only available at the Ballarat Veterinary Practice. Application of an electric current to the cancer after cisplatin has been injected or implanted has been shown to have the best long term results at preventing regrowth. ECT takes place under a brief intravenous general anaesthetic that lasts about 15 minutes.

In all cases a minimum of 2 treatments is recommended but 3 treatments are frequently undertaken by clients to try and reduce the risk of recurrence.

Regular assessment of sarcoid sites are strongly recommended every 3 months in the first 12 months after the initial treatment as a single additional treatment may be needed at various time points.

Cost of sarcoid treatment varies depending on size, location and whether general anaesthesia is required for removal and ECT

Four different levels of treatment are listed – the prices are an indication only as an accurate estimate can only be given after examining your horse.

Prices as at June2018

Level 1. First assessment and removal plus injectable cisplatin and ECT – 2200

Level 2 – Second injectable or bead implantation and ECT – 1600

Level 3 – Smaller sarcoid standing with beads only first assessment – 1200

Level 4 – Repeat bead implantation for smaller sarcoid - 660