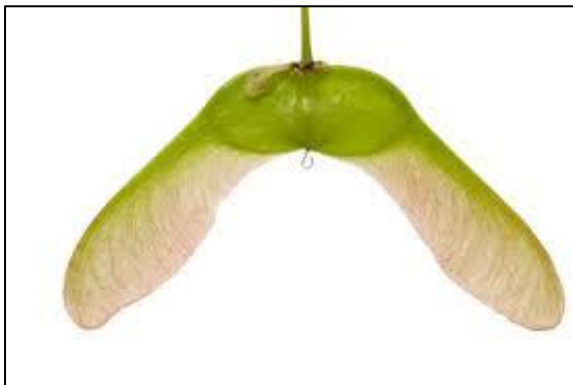




Atypical Myopathy

This is caused by a toxin called 'Hypoglycin A' which has been isolated from sycamore seeds in differing concentrations and is responsible for the muscle damage we observe in these cases. The seeds are the classic 'helicopter' type, which can be blown quite far with the wind.

Horses will not generally eat these seeds when good quality grass/hay is available. However they can be ingested in cases where the pasture is heavily contaminated.



Sycamore seeds

Red pigmented urine is a classic sign of atypical myopathy



Bexfields Farm
Galleywood road
Chelmsford
Essex
CM2 8BY
01245 346904

admin@clarendonequine.co.uk

Signs of atypical myopathy:

- Acute onset stiffness
- Trembling muscles
- Sweating
- Difficulty breathing
- Weakness
- Lying down or colic type symptoms
- Red/dark brown coloured urine (see picture above)
- Choke (oesophageal obstruction)
- These above signs can quickly progress severely and lead to death

If you notice any of these signs then call us as soon as possible. The prognosis for survival is much higher if we can treat them earlier.

Current research into the prevalence of this condition in the south of England has shown that the condition has a 56% mortality rate. More of the signs above shown/greater time spend lying down carry a poorer prognosis. However, horses that are treated quickly and aggressively when the signs are noted carry a better prognosis for survival (44%).

The toxin Hypoglycin A causes severe muscle damage (similar to 'tying up' but to a greater extent). This causes the release of a pigment called myoglobin from damaged muscle cells into the blood stream. When the body excretes this pigment in the urine you see a red colour. Myoglobin is very damaging to the kidneys so it's important to start fluid therapy early to minimise kidney damage. The muscle damage caused becomes very painful for the horse

Treatment usually requires intensive care, intravenous fluid therapy, pain relief and nutritional support with supplementary injectable vitamins such as B1 and B2 alongside vitamins E and C. This would usually involve hospitalisation to monitor horses closely. Most cases would require intravenous fluid therapy and treatment prior to travelling them to us if it is appropriate depending on the case.

Bexfields Farm
Galleywood road
Chelmsford
Essex
CM2 8BY
01245 346904

admin@clarendonequine.co.uk

There is an alert group where cases can be reported by following the link - <http://www.myopathieatypique.fr/en/la-maladie/>. Further helpful information is also available on this site.

What can we do to prevent it?

- Fence off areas near sycamore trees
- Hoover/pick up seeds where they have heavily contaminated the pasture
- Make sure there is adequate forage if grass availability is poor on their current grazing to discourage horses eating the seeds.
- Reduce the number of horses grazing a field if possible
- Checking fields regularly and carefully for the seeds.
- Sycamore seeds from your property can be sent off for analysis to check if the toxin hypoglycin A is present and in what quantity. This can provide valuable information on the level of risk on your pasture as the toxin is not always present or can be at low levels in some tree populations.

If you are concerned about sycamore seeds on your property and would like them tested, please contact us and we'd be happy to help.

Bexfields Farm
Galleywood road
Chelmsford
Essex
CM2 8BY
01245 346904

admin@claredonequine.co.uk