

July 2018 - "Cool"

Equine avocado poisoning.



This is Cool – he’s a 9 yo stockhorse who enjoys trail riding and relaxing in his paddock. Turns out, he also enjoys snacking on avocado leaves!

It is widely recognised that avocado has toxic effects in animals, but there are limited scientifically documented cases of the leaves being toxic to horses.

Cool presented with an acutely swollen face and generalised lethargy. At the time of examination, his vitals (Heart rate, Resp Rate, Temp etc.) were all within normal limits. It was initially suspected he was suffering from an acute allergic reaction such as an insect bite. However, he did not respond to treatment and his vitals and general demeanour deteriorated. His facial swelling and oedema worsened; his eyes were so swollen he was unable to see, he developed dramatic mucoid and purulent ocular and nasal discharge, his lymph nodes were enlarged and his throat was markedly swollen.

At this time full blood analysis was performed, and Cool was transported to our equine facility for hospitalisation and treatment.



After further investigation and in conjunction with the blood results and developing clinical symptoms, a presumptive diagnosis of a toxicity was made. When further examination of Cool's paddock was made, it was discovered he had been eating an avocado branch adjacent to his paddock and had stripped it of all leaves!

With this new information, Cool was treated with IV fluid therapy and adjunctive supportive medications. For several days he was closely monitored within the hospital and further testing completed. His condition, though serious, appeared to stabilise.

After 3 days of hospitalisation, Cool's demeanour showed marked improvement. He began to eat, his facial oedema improved, and his vitals normalised. He was discharged the following day and has since made a full recovery. He is now once again enjoying his paddock, AFTER all adjacent avocado trees were pruned!

If you have any queries about Cool, this case or any other veterinary or equine related services, please do not hesitate to contact us on (03) 5989 6232, check out our Facebook page or email us at [admin@mainridgevet.com.au](mailto:admin@mainridgevet.com.au).