

Arabian Horse Owner Named Stay on Guard Spokesperson

Arabian horse owner Kari Kemper Hickam of Blue Springs, Mo., has always gone the extra mile to ensure her horses are well cared for and healthy. She's slept in the barn with mares due to foal. She's hand-walked injured horses for hours to expedite recovery from surgery. She's in the barn every day to feed, water and clean stalls – before and after her eight-hour day in the marketing department of a bank. Because Kari has always gone to great lengths to keep her horses healthy, she was surprised when one of her show geldings was diagnosed with stomach ulcers.

Kari and her trainer noticed the gelding didn't seem to be his normal, robust self. "He looked terrible, was losing weight and his coat was very poor and sparse," she says. "My trainer immediately suspected stomach ulcers." Her veterinarian conducted an endoscopy examination, confirming the trainer's assessment.

"I couldn't believe my horse had ulcers," Kari recalls. The horse was treated with GASTROGARD[®] (omeprazole), and recovered. Since then, Kari has added a regimen of ULCERGARD[®] (omeprazole) to prevent the development of future ulcers.

That was five years ago, and Kari has since used the equine stomach ulcer prevention product on additional show horses. "The training routine, traveling and competitive show environment can be stressful," she says. "I've learned that stress can lead to the development of stomach ulcers no matter how well a horse is taken care of or how healthy it is. That's why I use ULCERGARD on my show horses before, during and after an event."

Kari's positive experience with the product led her to enter the Merial Stay on Guard spokesperson contest. She was named a finalist in the western category by a panel of judges and went on to receive the most online votes in that division. Kari recently traveled to Arroyo Grande, Calif. for a photo shoot with renowned western photographer David Stoecklein. The shoot was at the ranch of Sheila Varian, who has been breeding highly sought-after breeding, pleasure and show Arabian horses for more than 50 years. "Being at Sheila's ranch, surrounded by her incredible horses was really an amazing, once-in-a-lifetime experience," says Kari. "She is a legend in the Arabian industry."

Stoecklein, heralded as "Photographer of the American West," captured images of Kari with Sheila's horses that will be featured in a new ULCERGARD ad. In addition to Kari, three other Stay on Guard spokespersons were named: Lyndsey Tait in the English category, Christian Zehender in the Racehorse category and Amie Allen in the Veterinarian/Veterinary Technician category.

Each of the Stay on Guard spokespersons, including Kari, has learned about the prevalence of stomach ulcers in horses of all breeds and disciplines.¹ In fact, during endoscopy events conducted around the country by Merial between 2008 and 2010, 58 percent of the horses were found to have some degree of stomach ulceration.²

“Stomach ulcers can occur in horses even when they receive the highest levels of veterinary and personal care,” says April Knudson, DVM, Equine Specialist for Merial’s Large Animal Veterinary Services. “If and when horses do develop ulcers, they most likely aren’t able to perform at their best. That’s why preventing them is especially important for horse owners who compete.”

Active on the Arabian horse show circuit since she was 9 with horses she breeds and raises, Kari competes in six to 10 events each year throughout the Midwest. “I consider ULCERGARD to be just as important as proper nutrition, good training and preparation,” she says.

Visit www.ulcergard.com for additional details about equine stomach ulcers and ULCERGARD.

About Merial:

Merial is a world-leading, innovation-driven animal health company, providing a comprehensive range of products to enhance the health, well-being and performance of a wide range of animals. Merial employs approximately 5,600 people and operates in more than 150 countries worldwide. Its 2010 sales were more than \$2.6 billion. Merial is a Sanofi company.

For more information, please see www.merial.com.

Important Safety Information:

Caution: Safety of GASTROGARD in pregnant or lactating mares has not been determined.

ULCERGARD can be used in horses that weigh at least 600 pounds. Safety in pregnant mares has not been determined.

¹Mitchell RD. Prevalence of gastric ulcers in hunter/jumper and dressage horses evaluated for poor performance. Association for Equine Sports Medicine. September 2001.

² Data on file at Merial.

®ULCERGARD and GASTROGARD are registered trademarks of Merial.
©2011 Merial Limited, Duluth, GA. All rights reserved. EQUIUGD1131 (08/11)