

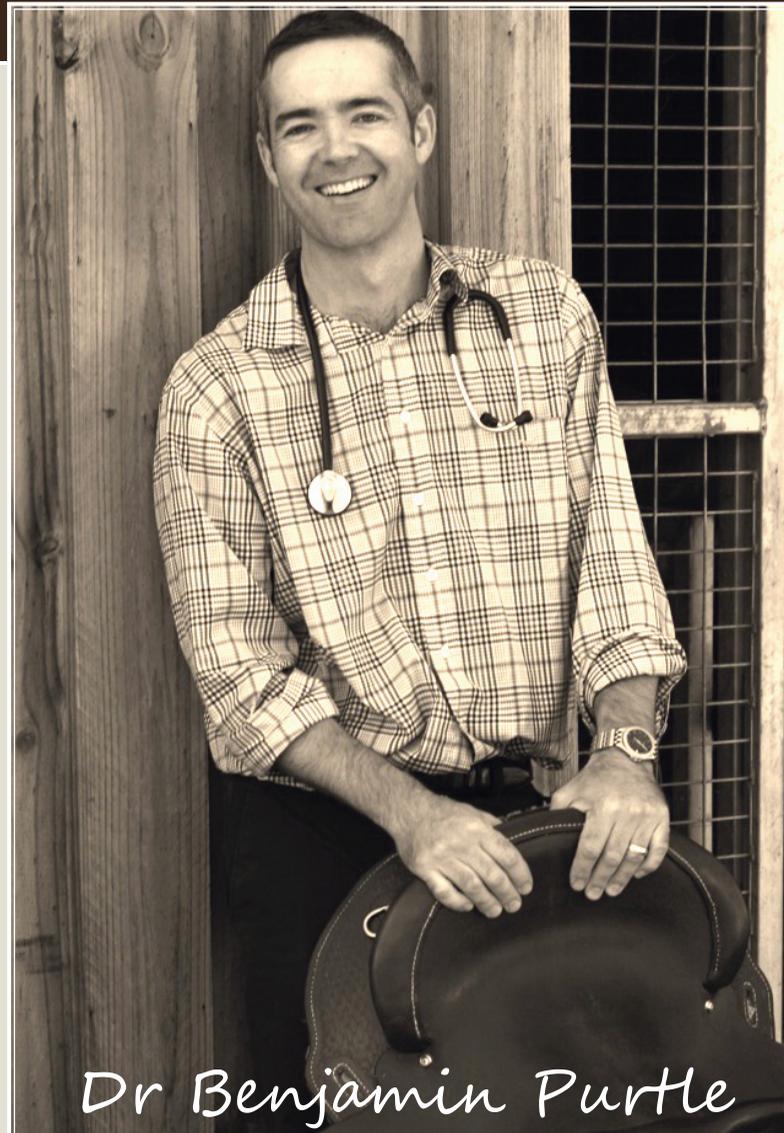
Words of Wisdom

I have great memories of learning to ride at age 12 on a pony mare called “Dolly” who was paddocked next door.

Her owners usually let us ride her bareback and sometimes three at a time. Despite some tumbles, it was a great introduction. She was well managed except for the time she was fenced next to a young colt with only wire between them. Their brief courtship (he jumped the fence), resulted in a foal to the amazement of everyone, as we thought she was just overweight!

Ponies are great to lease or borrow, as you don't have to outlay large sums of money. Nevertheless you need to be financially prepared, whether you own or are just leasing a pony, if urgent and expensive veterinary care is required. When you are financially prepared for a health crisis in your pony, you are in a position to make quick decisions to enable your veterinarian to organise or perform lifesaving treatment for your pony. It is comforting to know that affordable veterinary insurance policies are now available to assist financially when your pony is in need of help.

Buying a pony is a bit like buying a second-hand car without a manufacturer's warranty. The good news is that your veterinarian is professionally trained to perform a “road worthy” on your potential new pony. This is best done prior to handing over your hard earned cash and is called a Pre-Purchase Veterinary Examination or PPE.



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This examination can be as simple as examining a wound or blemish that you are concerned about, all the way through to extensive examination of each organ system. Personally, I would be cautious about buying a pony from someone who refuses your request for a PPE. Keep in mind that a PPE can give you information that may be used as a bargaining tool in your favour!

So you have found your perfect pony and a near perfect paddock and you are ready for your journey. Along the way you will become familiar with the common husbandry duties you will need to perform to keep your pony happy and healthy. This information can be sought from many sources and preferably prior to his or her arrival. Sources such as your local veterinarian, the previous owner of your pony, pony and horse owning friends and relatives, pony clubs and instructors, libraries and of course, the internet. Maintaining good health, mentally, emotionally and physically in your pony is an ongoing concern and requires

accurate and regular dosing of deworming products, vaccinations given correctly and on time, quality nutrition and water, regular and appropriate exercise and enough room to unwind, graze and interact with other ponies or horses.

Thank you to Lorraine Dowdeswell for this opportunity to share this information that will assist you in making good choices and may all your pony dreams come true!