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Equine Foot Lameness Discussed by AAEP Veterinarians

by: Multiple Authors

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Foot lameness in horses was the topic of two separate Table Topics during the 2009 American Association of Equine Practitioners (AAEP) Convention in Las Vegas, Nev., in early December. About 100 veterinarians attended each session.

Attendees discussed diagnostic anesthesia of the foot in both sessions. Part of the problem they encounter is overlap between blocks, making exact location of some lesions extremely difficult.

Veterinarians agreed advanced imaging (especially MRI) helps them to understand pathology in the foot. It was noted that MRI imaging has improved vets' ability to make a more accurate diagnosis from which they can choose an appropriate therapy. Collateral ligament injuries and the superiority of MRI evaluation vs. ultrasound examination was also discussed.

Shoeing as it applies to mismatched feet was talked about in depth. The group agreed not to try to fix upright angles in mature horses, but trim to prevent worsening of the condition.

Intra-articular, intrasynovial, and intrabursal therapies and the agents available for therapies--including corticosteroids, hyaluronic acid, polysulfated glycosaminoglycan, and IRAP--were also discussed. Veterinarians in the room expressed interest in the use of Tildren for navicular syndrome.

Again, the importance of a diagnosis to determine the problem causing the lameness and needing therapy was emphasized. Appropriate therapeutic shoeing and hoof balance as an adjunct to any therapeutic intervention was emphasized repeatedly. The importance of good farrier/veterinarian cooperation was also pointed out.

These Table Topics were facilitated by Reese Hand, DVM, Mike Pownall, DVM, and Kent Carter, DVM, MS, Dipl. ACVIM, who wrote this report.

Readers are cautioned to seek the advice of a qualified veterinarian before proceeding with any diagnosis, treatment, or therapy.



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