



Type and characteristics of Equine Colic

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Summary: - Colic is a complex symptom exhibited by animals when there is painful condition of any abdominal organs. The etiology of colic can be **spasmodic**/spastic contraction of the intestinal muscles, **tympanic**/due to excessive gas accumulation in the intestinal tract, **impactive**/impacted food mass, stone and **displacement**/extra-luminal due to mechanical distortion or obstruction of intestine. There are several causes of colic like physical agents which includes feed related; water related and poor teeth. Diagnoses done based on clinical sign and physical examination of patients.

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Key words: - *Colic and Equine*

1. Introduction

Colic is a condition that affects many equine and usually manifested by pawing, rolling, sweating, kicking at the abdomen of equine. Roughage may predispose the horse to improper digestion of feedstuffs with a resultant impaction and Water related-insufficient amounts of water create dry ingesta prone to impaction.

1.1. Definition:

Colic is a complex symptom exhibited by animals when there is painful condition of any abdominal organs. It is common in equine species; however, it may occur in other animals as well.

1.2. Etiology;

Depending on its cause, colic is classified into the following classes even though they are not mutually exclusive. **A) Spasmodic (spastic) colic:** It is characterized by a periodic spastic contraction of the intestinal muscles or visceral pain. It is the most common type in equine species. This may occur due to irritation of GI mucosa by unsuitable foodstuff, excitement, or drinking of cold water following work. **B) Tympanic (flatulent) colic:** it results from excessive gas accumulation in the intestinal tract where over distension of viscera stimulates pain and pressure receptors causing mild to severe colic. **C) Impactive colic/ obstructive colic:** It may result due to obstruction or impaction of GIT with impacted food mass, stone, sand, foreign body. It can be seen in stomach, cecum, colon, etc. and **D) Displacement**

/extra-luminal colic: due to mechanical distortion or obstruction of intestine with a consequence of interference with blood supply, e.g. volvulus, strangulation, intussusceptions, etc.

1.3. Causes:

Physical agents like: 1) Feed related: - coarse roughage may predispose the horse to improper digestion of feedstuffs with a resultant impaction. 2) Water related-insufficient amounts of water create dry ingesta prone to impaction; 3) Poor teeth- similar to poorly digestible feeds, improper mastication cause some impactions and 4) Parasitic agents: migrating larval forms of *S.vulgaris* interfere with circulation and innervations of various parts of the large intestine, which affects gut motility leads to impaction.

1.4. Clinical findings:

The cardinal sign of colic is due to abdominal pain manifested by pawing, rolling, sweating, kicking at the abdomen, getting up and down frequently, flank-watching, hyper motility of intestine, increased respiratory and heart rate, absence of faces.

1.5. Diagnosis: clinical findings and history of the animal related to management of feed.

1.6. Treatment includes:-

1) treatment should aim to relief pain targeting to the predisposing factors, 2) Use of analgesics like flunixin meglumine, xylazine, phenylbutazole, 3) Use of laxatives in case of impactive colic for softening the mass, 4) Surgical exploration or laparotomy in case of

extra-luminal colic and 5) Regular deworming of horses and improvement of husbandry.

1.7. Prevention of colic:

Once you figure out the cause and have treated the colic and you should be followed the following principles for future health of equine such as: 1) Feed your horse on a regular schedule even on the weekends, 2) Do not make sudden changes to the horse's diet, 3) A clean fresh water supply should always be available, 4) Keep feed boxes and hay racks as well as the feedstuffs clean and free of mold and dust, 5) Check teeth frequently for dental problems that may cause chewing issues, 6) Provide adequate exercise 7) Feed the appropriate amount of forage (at least 50% of the total diet), 8) Keep feed off the ground to avoid sand ingestion and Practice an effective parasite control program that fits your farms needs.

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