



Laminitis

Laminitis is a painful and potentially serious hoof condition in horses caused by inflammation of the laminae, the delicate tissues that hold the pedal bone to the hoof wall. It can lead to the pedal bone sinking or rotating, and in severe cases, penetrating the sole. Symptoms include reluctance to move, lameness and a classic "rocking-back" stance to relieve weight from the front feet. Causes can include endocrine diseases, diets high in sugar, stress, infection, orthopaedic issues and obesity, while chronic cases show growth rings on the hoof. Prompt veterinary care is crucial for diagnosis and treatment to prevent permanent damage and is considered an emergency.

Treatment

Laminitis is irreversible and once clinical signs are observed, the damage is already underway. At this point, it is important to minimize further progression. Treatment largely involves pain management NSAID and supportive care. Successful management is dependent upon good relationships between owners, veterinarians, and farriers.

Horses may be placed on stall rest with deep bedding, non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) are often used for pain relief and to control inflammation. Cold therapy in the form of ice baths or boots may also be utilized to minimize inflammation in very early stages.

Regular farrier care is required to provide mechanical support and encourage normal hoof growth. Radiographs may be used to guide trimming and shoeing to redistribute weight from the hoof wall to other structures and minimize tension on the deep flexor tendon.

Dietary management is required for horses concurrently diagnosed with EMS & Cushing's. This includes hay with low non-structural carbohydrate (NSC) content and a low calorie balancer, along with treatment for the primary condition (i.e. pergolide for PPID ertugliflozin for EMS)

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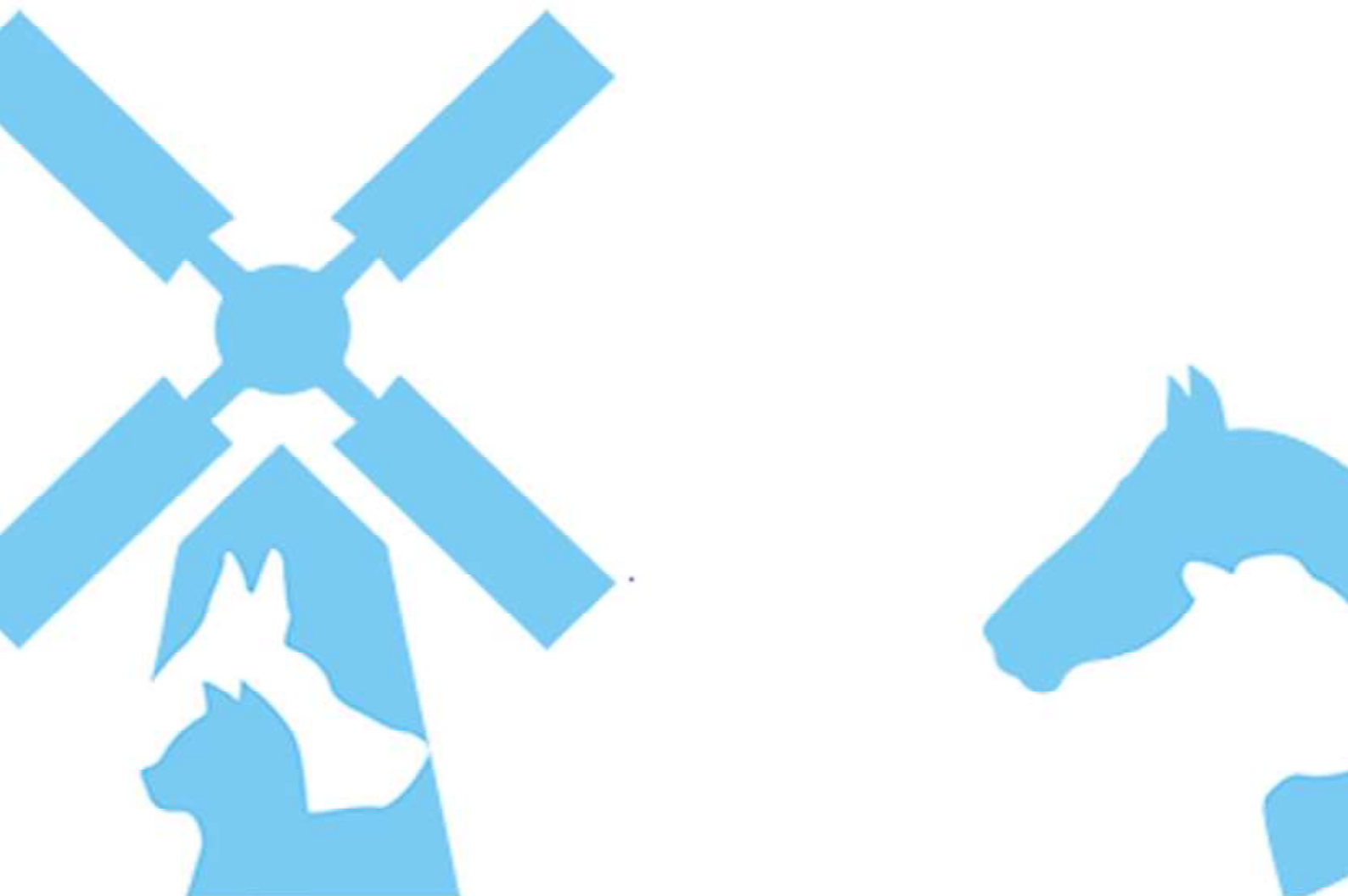
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Prognosis

The prognosis for horses with laminitis can vary widely from horse to horse. Horses with a mild episode of laminitis may recover, especially if the pedal bone is not displaced. Once founder occurs, recovery is lengthy, and the outcome is uncertain. Some cases are euthanised due to pain that cannot be adequately managed. Early identification is ideal for recovery. Call us immediately if you suspect that your horse is developing laminitis.



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