Laminitis 101

Secretariat, a Triple Crown winner, and Barbaro, a Kentucky Derby winner, have more in common than just being champion racehorses. In fact, they were both victims of Laminitis, which is a debilitating equine disease.

Laminitis is a very detrimental disease, especially because it influences the athletic ability of the horse affected and can be deadly in some cases. The Associate Professor of Surgery from Pennsylvania Veterinary Medical School, Dr. James Orsini, stated that, “Laminitis is very serious, and can be life threatening due to chronic and unrelenting pain associated with the loss of support and tearing of the tissue in the hoof.”

This potentially fatal disease is a painful inflammation of the laminae in a horse’s hoof. Laminae is the material that anchors the coffin bone to the hoof wall. When this area swells or becomes inflamed, they become very sore. As a result, there is not a lot of room for expansion in the hoof, which results in both pain and discomfort for the horse.

Also, when the laminae becomes inflamed, it puts pressure on the blood vessels of the hoof or hooves that are affected. This is the reason that the hoof begins to die and the coffin bone is able to rotate. According to the site, Acreage Equines, “It occurs most often in the front feet, although it can affect the hind feet as well.”...(continued on page 5)  - By Anna Eberhart
Canine Parvovirus is a severe and often fatal virus affecting the lining of the intestinal tract. This disease kills cells that are crucial in the absorption of nutrients. Commonly referred to as “Parvo”, it is one of the most common infectious diseases that is found in dogs. In fact, it can be found in any sex, age, or breed of dog. However, the majority of cases are seen in dogs that are less than 6 months old. Certain breeds, such as Rottweilers, Doberman Pinschers, and Labrador Retrievers, appear to be more susceptible than others.

Parvovirus is extremely contagious and can be transferred to another dog by humans, animals, or objects that come into contact with the feces of an infected dog. In the correct conditions, this virus can survive up to 5 months outside of a host. In addition, it is able to withstand the stress created by extreme heat and subzero temperatures for long periods of time. As a result, the virus may survive on a surface long after the infected feces have been removed.

The symptoms exhibited by dogs infected with Parvo depend on the age of the animal. The most severe cases are seen in puppies that are less than 12 weeks old. When puppies are infected at this early age, the virus can cause life-threatening damage to the heart, by causing heart failure. Parvo attacks the growing cells that are found in the bone marrow and the digestive tract, while also affecting the dog’s immune system. Severe fluid loss can occur though bloody diarrhea and vomiting. These symptoms cause dehydration, a buildup of toxins in the bloodstream, and in some cases, death. On the other hand, adult dogs that are exposed to Parvo show very few symptoms.

The most effective way to treat Parvo is to replace the fluids that have been lost as a result of diarrhea and vomiting. Antibiotic treatment can also be given to help control the secondary bacterial infections that may occur after this disease has taken hold in a dog. These treatments have been proven to control the complications and secondary side-effects that are produced by the Parvo-
virus. Although there are protocols in place to treat dogs infected with Parvo, the mortality rate in dogs between 6-20 weeks old is 16-35%.

Because Parvo gains entry through the mouth, any unvaccinated dog can be susceptible. In order to prevent the spread of this disease, wipe your shoes off with 1 part bleach to 30 parts water, if you have been to, or have walked through a known infected area. This solution of bleach and water will kill the virus on objects that are a potential carrier for the virus. Also it is important to keep you dog away from feces. If your dog is experiencing vomiting, severe diarrhea, depression, or loss of appetite, make sure that you contact your veterinarian as soon as possible.

- Written by Jill Steinhour

Vaccination is the key to prevent this disease and protect your dog. Breeding females should be vaccinated prior to becoming pregnant to ensure that the pups get the best start at immunity. Vaccinations should start at 6 weeks of age, and be booster at 9, 12, and 16 weeks of age. Some veterinarians also booster at 20 weeks, depending on the breed and Parvovirus risk in your area. Speak with your veterinarian about what vaccination protocol is the best for your pet and your lifestyle.
Pre-Vet Day: Saturday, Oct. 11th

9:00 am to 4:20 pm at CSU

Those who attend will participate in:

- 2 labs
- Exotics Lab
- 2 lectures
- Receive Lunch and t-shirt

General Meeting Dates

Meetings are always held on Wednesday evenings from 5:30-6:30 pm.

September 3rd—Clark A101
September 17th - Yates 104
October 1st - Yates 104
October 15th - Clark A101
October 29th - Yates 104
November 12th - Yates 104

Club Dues:
$20.00 for a full year, $12.00 for one semester

Club Contacts

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Office: 121 TILT Building
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OFFICE HOURS Fall 2014

In Room B22 of the TILT Building

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The most common cause of Laminitis, is stress to healthy legs. The Australian writes that, “Equine surgeons see Laminitis most in cases such as Barbaro’s, when a horse that has had a leg surgery shifts too much weight off of the injured leg onto a healthy one.” This excess weight puts too much stress and pressure on the healthy leg, and causes inflammation and pain. Other causes of Laminitis are: stressful situations, like colic, recurring injury or strain to the horse’s legs or hooves, exercising a horse on a hard surface without adequate protection for the hooves, and a diet that is high in carbohydrates. This can lead to digestive issues which have been known to cause reduced blood flow.

Symptoms of Laminitis can be as diverse as the cases. Dr. James Orsini, continued to explain that symptoms can include “Increased temperature of the hoof wall, sole and coronary band of the hoof. A pounding pulse in the digital palmar artery (the pulse is very faint or undetectable in a cold horse, and is readily evident after a hard exercise). The horse standing in a ‘founder stance’ (the horse will attempt to decrease the load on the affected foot). If Laminitis is present in the front hooves, it will bring its hind legs under its body and put its front legs out to relieve the pressure.

A veterinarian’s first goal is to minimize the progression of the disease by stopping the initial cause. A general treatment that is used is to administer an anti-inflammatory medication, and to provide pain killers. Surgery is another option for treatment. By removing some of the hoof, Sherry Ross, a writer for the Daily News writes, “It encourages regrowth of healthy tissue.”
"Lots of people talk to animals...Not very many listen though...that's the problem."
- Benjamin Hoff

"The more I learn about people, the more I like my dog."
- Mark Twain

Q: What do you give a sick pig?
A. Oinkment!

Q: What do you give a pony with a cold?
A. Cough Stirrup!

Q: What kind of dog does a vampire own?
A. A Bloodhound

DID YOU KNOW?
- A crocodile cannot stick out its tongue.
- Frogs drink and breathe though their skin.
- Porcupines float in water
Trivial Corner

What Animal Can hold its breath for 45 minutes?

A. Beaver  
B. Polar Bear  
C. Otter  
D. Platypus

Trivia Answer: A.

Here are a few cute ideas for your dogs this Halloween.
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SAVE THE DATE
Pre-Vet Day is
Saturday October 11