

LACTATION TETANY IN MARES

Synonyms: Eclampsia, Transit tetany.

- Common occurrence in draft horses breeding, the mortality rate is high i.e. > 60%
- Occurs in lactating mares- at about 10th day of foaling or 1-2 days after weaning
- Mares grazing on lush pasture - the heavy flow of milk - more susceptible
- Hard physical work, housing wild ponies, and prolonged transport are precipitating factors
- Sometimes- no apparent cause.

Clinical signs

- Severe cases -sweat profusely, difficulty in moving because of tetany and in-coordination, stiff gait, the tail is slightly raised, rapid violent respiration, wide dilatation of nostrils, distinct thumping sound from the chest(due to spasm of the diaphragm), muscular fibrillation-masseter trismus, no prolapse of membrane nictitans.
- Hypersensitive to sound.
- Handling precipitates tetany.
- Temperature normal or increased slightly.
- Pulse rate-normal early, later elevated and irregular.
- Attempts to eat and drink, but unable to swallow.
- Urination and defecation kept in abeyance.
- Peristalsis is reduced.
- Recumbency within 24 hrs-convulsions- die after 48 hrs of illness.
- Serum Ca: > 8mg% - excitability; 5-8 mg% -spasm; <5 mg % - recumbency and stupor

Differential diagnosis

- Tetanus -prolapse of membrane nictitans, no relationship to recent foaling or weaning or physical exertion.
- Laminitis - anxiety, muscle tremor, pain in the foot.

Treatment

- Inj. Calcium solutions- complete recovery.
- Main sign of recovery-voiding large volumes of urine.