



Herbers Veterinary Services
52024 RR225 Sherwood Park, AB
Phone: (780) 467-3765
Email: office@herbersvet.ca

**EQUINE
PITUITARY PARS
INTERMEDIA
DYSFUNCTION**

PPID/ Cushings

DID YOU KNOW?

- There are many clinical signs that can be seen in a horse with PPID.
- Some clinical signs may be minor and even go unnoticed in the early stages of the disease.
- All ages of horses can be affected by PPID, but it is common in horses over the age of ten and any breed can be affected.

CLINICAL SIGNS

- Laminitis episodes with the fall
- Loss of top-line and potbelly appearance
- Increased appetite with weight loss
- Lethargy and decreased athletic performance
- Delayed shedding or abnormal hair growth
- Cresty neck, fat pads over shoulders or around tail head, swollen sheath
- Increased drinking with increased urination
- Recurrent infections especially of the skin
- Inability to get pregnant or come in to normal heat cycles
- Abnormal sweating



- Diagnosis of PPID is completed via blood work. Cortisol itself is difficult to test accurately, and thus, the ACTH levels are measured. Horses will have an increased level of circulating glucose as well as an increased level of ACTH.

WHAT IS PPID?

- This disease is caused by a dysfunction of the pituitary gland.
- The portion of the pituitary gland called the pars intermedia, becomes enlarged often due to a benign tumor growth and thus functions abnormally.
- The pituitary gland is often referred to as the control gland as it secretes hormones that control the function of other glands.
- ACTH is a hormone secreted by the pituitary gland. ACTH controls the production and release of another hormone cortisol.

- When cortisol is increased to abnormal levels, the side effects can range from minimal to devastating.

TREATMENT

- There is no cure for PPID but an effective treatment using the drug Prascend (pergolide mesylate) is available.
- A dosage of Prascend is chosen by your Veterinarian to initiate treatment.
- Blood work is repeated approximately eight weeks after starting Prascend to ensure the dose your horse is on is appropriate.
- Blood work and a veterinary exam should be performed at least bi-yearly to ensure the PPID continues to be in control.

MANAGEMENT

- Aside from Prascend, there are several things you can do for your PPID horse to assist in management of the disease.
 - 1) Diet management – Low starch and low sugar everything
 - 2) Treat management – Low starch and low sugar
 - 3) Body clipping if necessary
 - 4) Provide plenty of fresh water
 - 5) Deworm regularly
 - 6) Vaccinate
 - 7) Dental exams and floats
 - 8) Regular controlled exercise

INSULIN RESISTANCE (IR)

- Horses with PPID may also have a disease known as Insulin Resistance or IR. PPID horses should be tested for IR at the start of diagnosis as well as throughout treatment. They can develop IR at anytime in their life.

GOOD NEWS!

- PPID is highly manageable in horses. Most horses respond well to treatment and owners are thrilled with the return to youth that the horses appear to show once Prascend is initiated.
- A consistent relationship with your veterinarian is essential as well as a dedication by the owner to treatment and proper management.



DR. HERB HERBERS
DR. SAM CROSDALE
WWW.HERBERSVET.CA