



VETCT
CONSULTANTS IN TELEMEDICINE

IT'S YOUR CASE

Species: Equine Breed: Pony Sex: Gelding Age: 23 years

Clinical History:

23 year old pony gelding. Colicking for past 24 hours.

Anatomic regions: Abdomen

Details of study and technical comments: Three radiographic images of the ventral aspect of the abdomen are available for interpretation. The study is of diagnostic quality.

Diagnostic interpretation:

There are two elongated structures representing the entire ventral colon which is filled with mineral material. This is homogeneous in its most dorsal aspect and is more of a granular opacity ventrally. The indentations at the level of haustrae of the large colon are still recognized, however in some areas the ventral outline of the colon is lacking these indentations.

The height of this accumulation measures 14.7 cm and the length is estimated at 56 cm as it is spread over different projections. The most caudal extent of this accumulation is close to the area of the pelvic flexure (flexura pelvina).

Several smaller mineral dense accumulations are detected dorsal to these larger ones in the ventral colon, these vary in length from 1.3 cm to 3.9 cm and in height from 3.6 mm to 1.1 cm.

Gas mixed with soft tissue material is present in the mid to dorsal abdomen, most consistent with normal ingesta.



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This report is based on the available history and radiographic interpretation only and not on a physical examination of the patient. It must therefore only be interpreted by a currently licensed and registered veterinary surgeon responsible for the care of this patient.

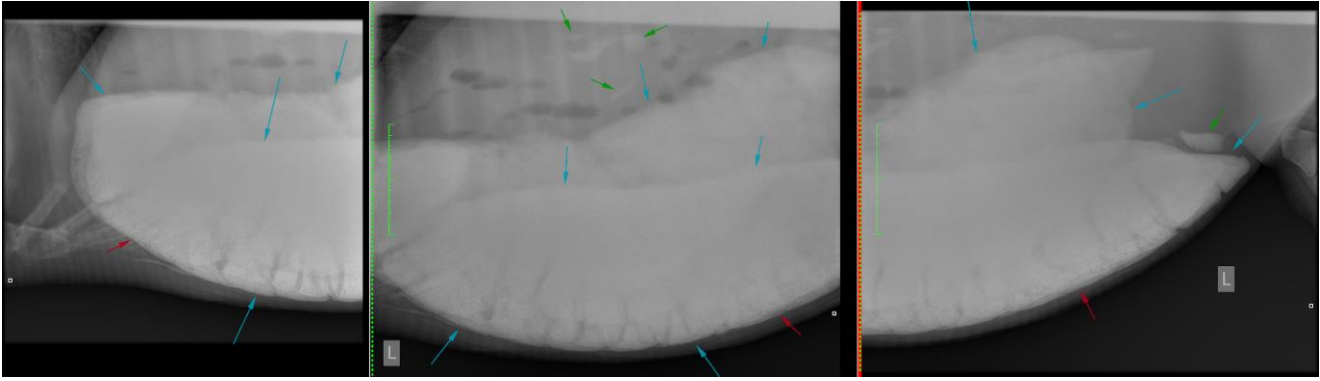


Figure 1: the red arrows point at the two elongated mineral dense accumulations in the ventral colon. The green arrows point at the smaller accumulations in other intestinal structures. The red arrows point at few locations with loss of outline of the haustrae related to the weight of this accumulation.

Conclusions:

Significant sand impaction in the large colon. This is likely to be the cause of colic symptoms in this patient.

Teaching Points:

- This case illustrates all of the 5 radiographic opacities (in order of increasing opacity): gas, fat, soft tissue, bone and mineral.
- A small amount of sand may accumulate in the ventral colon over time, but large accumulations such as this often cause colic.
- We do not routinely radiograph the abdomen of horses, as the exposure factors used are difficult/impossible to generate with commonly available portable machines. Larger hospital based machines are able to generate sufficient exposures to get diagnostic images in thinner or smaller animals.
- An alternative to radiography is ultrasound examination of the abdomen. Sometimes this is difficult in ponies due to their thick skin and long hair coat.

Further Reading

Kendall, Ley, Egenvall, Bröjer (2008) Radiographic Parameters for diagnosing sand colic in horses *Acta Vet Scand* 50:17 doi:10.1186/1751-0147-50-17



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