Laminitis
Cushing’s
and EMS

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LAMINITS

• Common
• Very painful
• Sometimes fatal
• Permanently deforming

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Traditional Treatment

• Off grass and diet
• Painkillers ‘bute’
• ACP dilates blood vessels and sedates. EBM.
• Support pedal bone - deep bed / frog supports
• X-ray for trimming and
• Heart bar shoes
Cushing’s Disease Signs

• Usually 15 years or older
• Laminitis
• Hirsutism
• Body fat redistribution
• Polydiyypsia /polyuria
• Imunosupression
• Sweating
• Cataracts
Cushing’s Disease
Cause, Diagnosis and Treatment

• Cushing’s=PPID Pituitary Pars Intermedia Dysfunction
• Decreased dopamine from hypothalamus
• Increased ACTH- Blood Sample
• Increased cortisol
• Pergolide = Prascend increases dopamine
Equine Metabolic Syndrome (EMS)

- Caused by Obesity
- Similar type 2 diabetes in people
- Genetic disposition ponies especially Shetlands and donkeys
- Commonest cause of laminitis
- Blood sample after overnight fast
- Glucose tolerance test
- Treated by dieting, exercise and drug (metformin)
Exercise
### Condition Scoring

**Zero**  
**Very Poor**
- Neck: Marked ‘ewe’ neck, narrow and slack at base.
- Back and Ribs: Skin tight over the ribs, ribs very visible. Spinous processes sharp and easily seen.
- Pelvis: Angular pelvis, skin tight, very sunken rump. Deep cavity under tail and either side of croup.

**One**  
**Poor**
- Neck: ‘Ewe’ neck, narrow and slack at base.
- Back and Ribs: Ribs easily visible, skin sunken either side of backbone. Spinous processes well defined.
- Pelvis: Rump sunken but skin supple, pelvis and croup well defined, cavity under tail.

**Two**  
**Moderate**
- A fit racehorse should be carrying this amount of fat.
- Neck: Narrow but firm.
- Back and Ribs: Ribs just visible, backbone well covered. Spinous processes felt.
- Pelvis: Rump flat either side of backbone, croup well defined, some fat, slight cavity under tail.

**Three**  
**Good**
- Most leisure horses will carry this level of fat.
- Neck: No crest (except stallions), firm neck.
- Back and Ribs: Ribs just covered, easily felt. No gutter along back, Spinous processes felt.
- Pelvis: Covered by fat and rounded, no gutter, pelvis easily felt.

**Four**  
**Fat**
- Neck: Slight crest, wide and firm.
- Back and Ribs: Ribs well covered. Gutter along back bone.
- Pelvis: Gutter to root of tail. Pelvis covered but soft fat, felt only with firm pressure.

**Five**  
**Very Fat**
- Neck: Marked crest, very wide and firm, folds of fat.
- Back and Ribs: Ribs buried cannot feel. Deep gutter, back broad and flat.
- Pelvis: Deep gutter to root of tail, skin distended, pelvis buried, cannot feel.

**Tips**
1. You are scoring for fat cover only.
2. Horses store fat on their necks, over their shoulders, over their backbone and ribs and on their rumps, NOT on their underbellies.
3. Divide the horse into 3 areas and feel for fat cover.
4. Give each area a score and then note the average score.
5. Condition score regularly.

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How to Diet

• Limit forage
• Cut out concentrates
• Provide Vitamins and Minerals
Successful Dieting

• Measure heart girth / weight with weigh band
• Record measurement and date so progress and trends can be monitored
Successful Dieting

• Record weekly to start with
• Set a target (30-60 kg)
• Take 3 months to get there
• Do not starve
• But do be strict!
Other Reasons for Avoiding Obesity

- Lipomas
- Lameness
- Hyperlipaemia
- Allergies

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Take Home Message

- Get off grass onto deep bed
- Hormone causes
- Cushing’s age and signs
- EMS test if obese
- Traditional T* still important incl painkillers, ACP and frog support
- X-ray and trimming
- X-ray essential for heart bars
What’s New?

• Botox

• Metalloproteinase inhibitors