

# Diagnosis, Treatment, and Outcome of Hindlimb Proximal Suspensory Desmopathy in Sport Horses: 75 Cases (2008–2014)

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Surgical treatment and extracorporeal shockwave therapy (ESWT) of hindlimb proximal suspensory desmopathy (PSD) have a similar rate of return to previous level of athletic function. Horses treated with ESWT return to their previous level of work sooner. Some horses require multiple treatment modalities and extended rehabilitation. Authors' addresses: Virginia Equine Imaging, 2716 Landmark School Road, The Plains, VA 20198 (Norvall, Allen, Johns); and Department of Veterinary Biosciences & Diagnostic Imaging and Large Animal Medicine, University of Georgia, College of Veterinary Medicine, Athens, GA 30602-7338 (Giguère, Selberg); e-mail: amynorvalldvm@gmail.com. \*Corresponding and presenting author. © 2015 AAEP.

## 1. Introduction

Hindlimb PSD is a common sport horse problem with reported medical or surgical treatment successes ranging from 41 to 87%. The purpose of this study is to describe the rate of return to athletic function in 75 sport horses with hindlimb PSD treated either surgically, with ESWT, or with a combination of the two modalities.

## 2. Materials and Methods

Inclusion criteria included: improvement after diagnostic analgesia, ultrasound findings consistent with PSD, treatment with only surgery, a series of three ESWT treatments or a combination of the two modalities, and a similar rehabilitation protocol.

## 3. Results

Forty-one horses underwent surgery with 24 returning to their previous level of work. Average time to return was 10.1 months. One returned to a lower level.

Thirty-four horses received ESWT with 20 returning to their previous level of work. Average time to return was 7.4 months. Four returned to a lower level.

Fifteen horses remained lame after the primary treatment and were treated with the other modality. Seven returned to their previous level after both treatments.

Thirty five of 75 horses had a unilateral injury.

## 4. Discussion

Surgery or ESWT for hindlimb PSD results in similar rates of return to previous level of athletic function. ESWT returns horses to their previous level significantly sooner.

## Acknowledgments

### *Declaration of Ethics*

The Authors declare that they have adhered to the Principles of Veterinary Medical Ethics of the AVMA.

### *Conflict of Interest*

The Authors declare no conflicts of interest.

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Research Abstract—for more information, contact the corresponding author

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## NOTES