Actinobacillosis in an Adult Thoroughbred Horse
(Case: N14-17)

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Signalment and History

- 2 year old Thoroughbred colt

- The horse was normal and trained as usual the previous day but did not consume all of his feed overnight.

- Referring veterinarian examined at 11 AM.
  - Hyperthermic (104.8°F)
  - Tachycardic
  - Reluctant to move
Signalment and History

- Treated with:
  - Banamine (flunixin meglumine)
  - Bactrim (sulfamethoxazole/trimethoprim)

- Died spontaneously at 3:30 PM
GROSS FINDINGS
MICROSCOPIC FINDINGS
Morphologic Diagnosis

- Embolic nephritis, suppurative, acute, multifocal to coalescing, severe, with intralesional Gram-negative bacilli and vasculitis.

- Microbiology:
  - Aerobic culture of the kidney yielded heavy growth of *Actinobacillus equuli* subsp. *equuli*. 
Actinobacillus equuli

- From the family Pasteurellaceae
- Gram-negative
- Pleomorphic; rod-shaped
- Facultative anaerobe

Commensal bacteria commonly isolated from healthy horses:
- Oral cavity
- Gastrointestinal tract
- Reproductive tract
Actinobacillus equuli

- Actinobacillosis is the most common cause of suppurative embolic nephritis in horses.
- A common cause of acute septicemia and enteritis in the neonatal foal.
“Sleepy Foal Disease”

• In neonates, also known as:  
  • “Sleepy foal disease,” “navel ill,” and “joint ill”

• Route of transmission:  
  • Contaminated umbilicus  
  • Inhalation  
  • Ingestion

• Clinical signs:  
  • Hyperthermia, tachycardia, tachypnea, lethargy, decreased suckle, diarrhea, reluctance to move

• Lesions commonly associated with septic actinobacillosis:  
  • Embolic nephritis, embolic pneumonia, lymphoid necrosis, multifocal hepatic necrosis, and septic arthritis
Actinobacillus equuli in the adult horse

- Actinobacillosis in adult horses is uncommon to rare.
- May be associated with stress or concurrent disease.
  - Most commonly seen in cases of suspected septicemia and respiratory disease
  - In many cases of septicemia was the primary pathogen
  - Respiratory actinobacillosis often a concurrent disease
    - (Layman et al., 2014)

- Associated lesions:
  - Sepsis
  - Peritonitis
  - Enteritis
  - Pleuropneumonia
  - Arthritis
  - Abortion
  - Periorchitis
  - Pericarditis
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- UF Diagnostic Laboratories
References:


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Questions?


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