**Title:** Pharmacokinetics of pergolide mesylate in donkeys

**Investigators:**
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**Study description:**
Donkeys are an important and common domesticated equid, and are widely used as working and companion animals worldwide. Many donkeys exhibit clinical signs, such as increased adiposity, hair coat changes, and laminitis, that are also seen in horses with pituitary pars intermedia dysfunction (PPID). Anecdotally, many donkeys with a clinical diagnosis of PPID or endocrinopathic laminitis are managed with similar dietary and pharmacological therapy regimens as are recommended for horses. Specifically, pergolide mesylate (Prascend®) is prescribed for suspected PPID in donkeys using equine dosing. However, drug dosages and dosing intervals recommended in horses cannot be directly extrapolated to donkeys due to critical differences in drug distribution and clearance between species. The objective of this study is to determine appropriate pergolide dosing recommendations for donkeys by evaluating how healthy donkeys absorb and metabolize this drug.

Inclusion criteria:
- Healthy donkeys 15 years of age or younger  
- Free from abnormalities on physical exam and screening labwork  
- Easily handled (halter trained preferred)  
- Have no history of endocrinopathies  
- No laminitis (active or historical)

Once enrolled, each donkey will be hospitalized at the Veterinary Teaching Hospital for 9 days. After a baseline blood sample (one teaspoon) is collected, a single dose of Prascend® will be administered and subsequent blood collection from a venous catheter will occur at specific time intervals for 48 hours after medication administration. Repeat dosing of Prascend® will occur at 48, 72, 96, 120, and 144 hours after the initial dose, and sampling will occur as described above after each dose.

Costs associated with the physical exam, screening labwork, boarding for 9 days, Prascend® administration, and blood collection and subsequent analysis will be paid for by the study. Upon study completion, one-time seasonal vaccines will also be offered. Treatment for any adverse events directly related to the study protocol will be covered up to a maximal cost of $2,000.

**Duration of study:**
The study is currently OPEN. Enrollment will terminate when the target enrollment is filled.

**Potential benefits to veterinary medicine:**
This data will provide information for donkey specific dosing of pergolide mesylate, in an effort to effectively treat life threatening laminitis that can result from PPID.