

## **Cunean Tenectomy**

Six hundred million years ago, horses had three toes. Evolution has produced a one-toed horse, allowing for an extra joint. Consequently, horses can run faster in attempts to evade predators. Anatomically, muscles become tendons which attach to bones and allow movement. For example, the tendons on the back of your hand are continuations of the muscle in your forearm. These tendons cause your fingers to move.

The second toe of the horse, formerly on the ground, is now located on the inside of the hock. The tendon, still attached to the toe and lower row of hock bones, now courses at a 90 degree angle. When the limb is moved forward, the lower row of hock bones is pulled by the cunean tendon while the upper row of the hock bones is not. There is therefore a torque between the upper and lower rows of bones with every step. Removal of a section of the cunean tendon will stop the movement of the lower row of bones, resulting in an elimination of tension between the two rows of bones. Cessation of the torque decreases the inflammation and a major cause of arthritis.

The removal of a section of the cunean tendon is done in sterile conditions using tranquilizer and local anesthetics. A ½ to ¾ inch piece of the tendon is removed along with any associated scar tissue to assure that the remaining end of the tendon is completely free. Patients are worked lightly for two weeks and then returned to previous exercise levels.

90% of the patients treated at Colorado Equine Clinic resume full work within 14-28 days. Recurrence of documented pain in the distal hock region occurs in less than 5% of patients over a lifetime.

With accurate diagnosis and surgical technique, the results of a cunean tenectomy are very therapeutic and long-lasting.

## Post-Surgical Instructions for Cunean Tenectomy

### Medications:

- Two grams of phenylbutazone orally, once a day for two days, starting \_\_\_\_\_ and ending \_\_\_\_\_
- Additional medications: \_\_\_\_\_

### Exercise:

Your horse is to go back to work the day after surgery, being worked lightly at least every other day until the sutures and bandages are removed in two weeks. Light work entails no more than 20 minutes of flat work or easy trail rides with few hills incorporating walk, trot, and canter in both directions. The same exercise done before surgery can be resumed once the stitches are removed. This includes jumping, long and difficult rides, and all other normal exercise. Most horses are improved by 70% after the surgery. The final 30% of improvement occurs by five months after the operation.

### Bandages:

Bandages are to remain in place until the stitches are removed. They may slide down about ¼ of an inch, which is normal. If you see any stitches at the top of the bandages, however, please contact us. Do not let the bandages get wet.

### Stitches:

Your stitches are scheduled for removal on \_\_\_\_\_. Call the office to schedule a time a week before your appointment.

### Diet:

Feeding regimes should remain the same providing exercise levels are maintained.

*Please call (303) 791-4747 with any questions or concerns!*