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Dr. Jorge Gomez of Palm Beach Equine Clinic Looks Forward to the Olympic Games in Rio *by Lauren Fisher, Jump Media*



The 2016 Olympic Games in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, are quickly approaching, and Palm Beach Equine Clinic is proud to have its own Dr. Jorge Gomez present to provide veterinary support for some of the world's most elite horses. Dr. Gomez is not only a top sport horse practitioner, but is also a renowned Board-Certified Surgeon.

Dr. Gomez will be in attendance at the prestigious Games to serve as the veterinarian for the team horses in show jumping events representing Venezuela and Colombia held August 14-18. Two elite horse and rider combinations competing for individual medals will represent each country. On behalf of Colombia, Daniel Bluman with Apardi and Rene Lopez aboard Con Dios III will compete individually. The riders representing Venezuela competing for individual medals include Pablo Barrios riding Antares and Emanuel Andrade with Hardrock Z.

There is a tremendous amount of work that

is required in preparing and maintaining a top performance horse for a significant world championship event such as the Olympic Games. While in Rio, Dr. Gomez will closely monitor that each horse is in optimal health conditions while competing. He is responsible for providing and administering permitted medications for muscle, joint, and tendon support, as well as vitamins and intravenous fluids, if necessary. Dr. Gomez also assists the competitors by providing and prescribing physical alternative therapies that help maintain the horse in the best possible form for competition.

Dr. Gomez, originally from Colombia, has been affiliated with Palm Beach Equine Clinic since 2011 and has since represented the clinic at the 2012 Olympic Games in London, England, the 2015 Pan American Games in Toronto, Canada, and the 2014 Alltech FEI World Equestrian Games in Normandy, France.

"It is a good opportunity to meet people at all levels and from all over the world that are involved in equestrian sports," Dr. Gomez said of representing the clinic worldwide. "Palm Beach Equine Clinic becomes a familiar place for all those acquaintances to come to and to refer their horses when they come to Wellington. Many of the horses that we take care of during the Winter Equestrian Festival in Wellington are referred to us because of the connections that we have made at the international competitions."

Since he has served at many major international events, Dr. Gomez understands the larger significance of preparing for the Olympic Games. An Olympic medal is a lifelong dream for most grand prix competitors, and having the right horse in peak condition is essential.

"Caring for the horses at the Olympic Games is the same as any other competition, but there

are maximal responsibilities," Dr. Gomez detailed. "Because of the nature of the event, riders want us to be checking the horses entirely on a daily basis for at least one week before the event starts.

"Of the four horses that will be under my care, three of them are my regular clients, so I keep a fairly close eye on them already," Dr. Gomez

added. "In conjunction with trainers and riders, we planned a schedule that we think is the best for the event. I look forward to the competition, and I hope that the horses under my care perform according to expectations."

Palm Beach Equine Clinic, the industry leader in sport horse veterinary care, features an illustrious list of veterinarians who are experts

in their respective fields. Dr. Gomez and PBEC's team of 30 veterinarians, including Board-Certified Surgeons and Radiologists, are available to provide services to clientele throughout North America and around the world in the various horse sport disciplines. For more information, call **561-793-1599** or visit **www.equineclinic.com**.

Horse Healthcare

Management of Thrush, Rainrot, and Scratches *by Lauren Fisher, Jump Media*



Thrush, Rainrot, and Scratches are problems that most equestrians have probably encountered, but in the hot, wet climate of South Florida, these issues can incessantly plague horses and their owners. While different in their presentation, Thrush, Rainrot, and Scratches have a lot in common. For horse owners, there are several problems that arise due to environmental factors or predisposing conditions, but these issues can easily be prevented or treated with proper care and management.

This month, Palm Beach Equine Clinic's Dr. Bryan Dubynsky shared his expertise on the causes, treatment, and prevention of Thrush, Rainrot, and Scratches. Read on to learn more!

Thrush

Thrush is an infection within the horse's hoof, most commonly caused by bacteria that invade the deeps clefts or grooves (known as

sulci) of the frog. *Fusobacterium Necrophorum* is the common bacterial culprit, which naturally occurs in the environment, especially in wet, muddy, or unsanitary areas. Thrush bacteria thrives where there is a lack of oxygen.

Some horses are predisposed to developing Thrush due to conformation, such as a rather high heel or deep sulci, or a narrow or contracted heel. The bacteria will manifest in horse's feet that are not picked out regularly, or standing in muddy, wet environments, including paddocks or stalls that have not been cleaned properly.

Thrush can typically be first identified by the odor. The frog will have a strong, rotten odor and become spongy. Visually, the frog can even exudate (oozing) pus.

The treatment for Thrush is fairly simple as it is very sensitive to oxygen. The most important thing is to have your vet or farrier trim or debride the frog to expose areas to the

air. It is best to keep the hoof clean and dry. Adding a common detergent to the Thrush areas, such as Betadine or any commercial product (Thrush Buster, Coppertox, etc.) will help to kill the bacteria. Most importantly, if the horse is not removed from those predisposing environmental factors, treatments can be ineffective.

Maintaining a level of activity for our equine partners will increase blood flow to the feet and promote health to the area. Horses found in dry environments with ample space to move typically do not suffer from Thrush. The activity of horses moving keeps the frogs healthier. The more blood flow you have in the foot, the less chance that infection is able to manifest.

Thrush is not guaranteed to cause lameness. In extreme rare cases, Thrush can penetrate deeper and cause an infection in deeper tissue or even in the coffin bone. When in doubt, always contact your veterinarian.

Rainrot (*Dermotophilus Congolensis*)

Rainrot is caused by a naturally occurring bacteria named *Dermotophilus*, which produces spores. Rainrot is recognized as scabby, scaly, crusty spots on areas of the horse that have been exposed to rain. It is commonly seen on the neck or across the back (dorsum). Rainrot is not typically apparent on the legs or under the belly.

When there is a break in the skin, which can be even as simple as an insect bite, a surplus of rain on the skin washes away the natural protective oils. Once the skin is stripped of the natural protective layer or any sort of trauma to the skin barrier occurs, those spores are able to invade the deeper dermis skin layers. The spores penetrate into the deeper layers of the dermis, and the body reacts by sending white blood cells and proteins to fight the invaders.

This reactive response causes the small pustules, scabs, and bumps to form.

Similar to Thrush, Rainrot is an environmental issue. It is most commonly seen in warm areas with high humidity, excess rain, and insects. The most important prevention is to keep horses out of the rain for prolonged periods of time. A horse can be out in the rain for short periods of a day or two, but if it is constantly in hot and rainy conditions with biting insects, more than likely the horse will develop Rainrot.

Dr. Dubynsky emphasizes that topical products are not worth anything if the horse is not removed from the environmental factors. Once you remove the environmental factors, a keratolytic agent (something that exfoliates keratin), such as Benzoyl Peroxide or an antibacterial shampoo will help the skin heal. He also cautions that if the horse does have scabs, you do not necessarily want to pick the scabs off because then you are just leaving open skin without protection for more bacteria to invade. The most important tip to healing is to keep the area dry.

In very rare, severe cases of Rainrot, it is best to contact your veterinarian to put the horse on antibiotics. If left untreated, and the horse is not removed from the environmental causative factors, the infestation can lead to Staphylococcal Folliculitis; a type of Staph bacteria that will invade the hair follicles and cause a more serious situation.

Scratches

Scratches is a generic term for many different ailments. The definition of Scratches can be a bacterial, fungal, or viral dermatitis or inflammatory condition of the pastern or fetlock. It is defined as a chronic Seborrheic Dermatitis (flaking of the skin), characterized by hypertrophy (enlargement of tissue from an increase in cells) and exudation (escape of liquid from blood vessels through pores or breaks in the cell membranes) on the rear (palmar/plantar) surface of the pastern and fetlock.

There are certainly predisposing factors for Scratches, including the same environmental factors that cause Thrush or Rainrot. Predisposing factors for Scratches include horses that are bathed often or stand in wet conditions all the time. Horses that have an excess amount of hair on their legs, especially draft horses, also develop Scratches easily because the hair traps dirt and moisture on the skin.

Scratches can develop in horses that are bathed too often such as the intensely managed show horse. The show horse is desired to be very



clean, which can mean several baths a day. This will strip away the natural protective oils and barrier of the dermis, which allows bacteria or fungi to invade. When moisture penetrates the skin, it causes inflammation reacting with heat, redness, pain, and loss of protection to keep bacteria out.

The most effective first step for prevention and treatment should be to remove the environmental predisposing factors. Removing excess hair during the humid months and keeping horses clean and dry to the best of your ability will reduce the probability of developing an infection. Bathing horses once a day with Betadine or antifungal/antibacterial shampoo

will help to clear the infection. Be sure to leave the shampoo on for 20 minutes for all of the medicine to penetrate, rinse thoroughly, and make sure the horse is completely dry. In order to effectively treat the bacteria, horses should be completely towel or air dried before returning to their stalls or paddocks.

As always, contact your veterinarian immediately if there appears to be deeper infection present, or you would like more detailed information on how to treat and prevent these bacterial infections. For more information, call **561-793-1599** or visit **www.equineclinic.com**.

Palm Beach Equine Clinic Provides the Best in Emergency Colic Care

Care by Lauren Fisher, Jump Media

Fear of colic is in the back of many horse owners' minds, but with the expert care of Palm Beach Equine Clinic, owners can rest easy knowing that they have some of the world's best surgeons and veterinarians at their disposal in the event of an emergency.

Characterized by abdominal pain or problems with the gastrointestinal tract, colic is something that often arises unexpectedly and from many different origins. Spoiled feed, abrupt changes in feed, parasite infestation, sand ingestion, lack of water consumption, and even excess

stress or changes in the weather are among the numerous causes generally related to colic.

Whatever the cause may be, the most important step any owner can take is to recognize the symptoms as early as possible and immediately call their veterinarian. Pawing, rolling, looking at abdomen, sweating, loss of interest in food and water, and absence of gut sounds in any of the four quadrants are some of the telltale signs of colic development. Unfortunately, colic can be fatal, but the proper knowledge and care may save your horse's life.

The sooner your veterinarian gets involved in treatment, the better your horse's chance of survival.

In the event of an emergency, the veterinarians and surgeons of Palm Beach Equine Clinic are available 24/7 to offer the very best care for your equine partner. PBEC is renowned for its referral full-service surgical center and intensive care hospital located in the heart of Wellington, Florida. Board-Certified surgeons, primary care veterinarians, and skilled hospital technicians are scheduled 24 hours a day, 365 days a year to treat, monitor, and care for critical cases. With world-class veterinarians and a full staff of highly trained technicians, both clients and patients of PBEC are in the best hands possible.

Palm Beach Equine Clinic offers the latest in technology as the surgical techniques are less invasive and result in faster recovery times for your horse. The surgical team leader, Dr. Robert Brusie, is a nationally renowned, Board-Certified surgeon. Dr. Brusie's surgical specialties include orthopedic, arthroscopic, and emergency cases. Dr. Brusie has been the head surgeon with PBEC for the past 20 years.

"In the last ten years, colic surgery has come a long, remarkable way," Dr. Brusie stated. "With our clients, if the horse needs to go to surgery, we get an approximately 95% success rate. We attribute that to the client's excellent care of their horses, as well as their knowledge to contact us immediately. That being said, colic surgery is always the last resort. We try to help all horses improve medically first."

Palm Beach Equine's surgical suite and staff is prepared to handle all types of emergencies, day and night. The large team of 30 veterinarians includes three Board-Certified Surgeons who rotate on-call duties so every day is covered. This aids Palm Beach Equine veterinarians and all of Southeast Florida with the ability to treat their emergencies requiring surgical assistance as quickly as possible. The state-of-the-art intensive care hospital is equipped with top-of-the-line medical equipment, including digital video cameras for the clinicians to easily monitor their patients from any location, at any time.

For more information on the Palm Beach Equine Clinic facility or in case of an emergency, please call **(561) 793-1599** to contact an on-call veterinarian.

