

An anatomist's view on bovine lameness and limb problems.

Pieter Cornillie

Department of Morphology, Faculty of Veterinary Medicine, Ghent University, Salisburylaan 133, 9820 Merelbeke, Belgium.

The primary objective of this presentation is to provide all necessary anatomical data that are essential and useful during clinical examination and surgical intervention at the level of the bovine limbs. Instead of providing a complete and rather overwhelming topographical overview of the anatomical structures in the front and hind limbs, the anatomical data is selected and displayed step by step at the moment it becomes of relevance during typical surgical interventions in the limbs, such as correction of congenital contraction of the digital flexor tendons, claw amputation, denervation of the gastrocnemius muscle in spastic paresis and diagnosis or correction of some other limb anomalies. Not only will we focus on the question where certain structures can be found, during this approach, much attention will also be given to the relevance of the different structures: what are the consequences of sectioning a certain tendon, ligating a vessel or accidentally damaging a nerve? Finally, although certain important differences exist between the topography of the bovine front foot and hind foot, some general mnemonics and rules of thumb will be offered that can help the surgeon to anticipate the anatomical configuration that will become exposed after cutting through a certain layer or structure, regardless of which foot is treated.