

Successful Surgical Debridement of a Cerebral Streptococcus equi equi Abscess by Parietal Bone Flap Craniotomy of a 2-Month Old Warmblood Foal

Broux B¹, Van Bergen T², Schauvliege S², Vali Y³, Lefere L¹, Gielen I³

¹*Department of Large Animal Internal Medicine, Faculty of Veterinary Medicine, Ghent University, Merelbeke, Belgium;* ²*Department of Surgery and Anaesthesiology of Domestic Animals, Faculty of Veterinary Medicine, Ghent University, Merelbeke, Belgium;* ³*Department of Veterinary Medical Imaging, Faculty of Veterinary Medicine, Ghent University, Merelbeke, Belgium*

Brain abscesses and intracranial masses have been regularly described in horses. Treatment is often difficult and unrewarding resulting in high mortality rates. Surgical debridement and drainage of a cerebral abscess using parietal bone flap craniotomy has not been described in equine medicine. A 2-month old female Warmblood foal was presented with severe neurological signs of acute onset. Computed tomography (CT) revealed a 3x4x4cm cerebral mass in the left brain hemisphere with remarkable cerebral edema. Craniotomy, using a parietal bone flap technique, allowed the abscess to be sampled, drained and lavaged. Immediately post-surgery the foal showed remarkable clinical improvement. Sample culture confirmed *Streptococcus equi equi* infection. The foal was further medically treated for 6 weeks, leading to complete clinical and radiographical (CT) recovery. Intracranial surgery in equine medicine is limited. Using a parietal bone flap instead of partial craniectomy to gain access to the cerebrum is a less invasive procedure leading to better aesthetic results and should be considered to treat cerebral masses in the horse.