
CAPE VETERINARY EQUINE PRACTICE

Cape Veterinary Equine Practice
Sweet Valley Farm, Bergvliet, 7806

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Tel: 021 712 2290

Company Reg: 2013/155992/07

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

On Thursday 19th January at approximately 15h30 Inspector Jaco Pieterse presented me with four intact male horses that he and his team had confiscated. He reported that the horses had been stabled in a deep litter system in small dark stables. The one stallion had been tied up in extreme neck flexion at the time of confiscation, reportedly for training.

Animal Details:

SPCA admission number: 413397

Species: Equine Breed: Hackney Pony

Sex: Stallion

Colour: Dark Bay

Age: 5.5 yrs

Description: Dark bay with two white hind fetlocks and one white right front coronary band.



Examination Findings:

The horse was clinically normal with a body condition score of 2. He was anxious and guarded to work with but improved with the doors closed and the lights off. His neck flexions were normal, but he was anxious about palpation of the poll and both the rhomboidus and splenius muscles were hypertrophied cranially.

Ultrasonographic Findings:

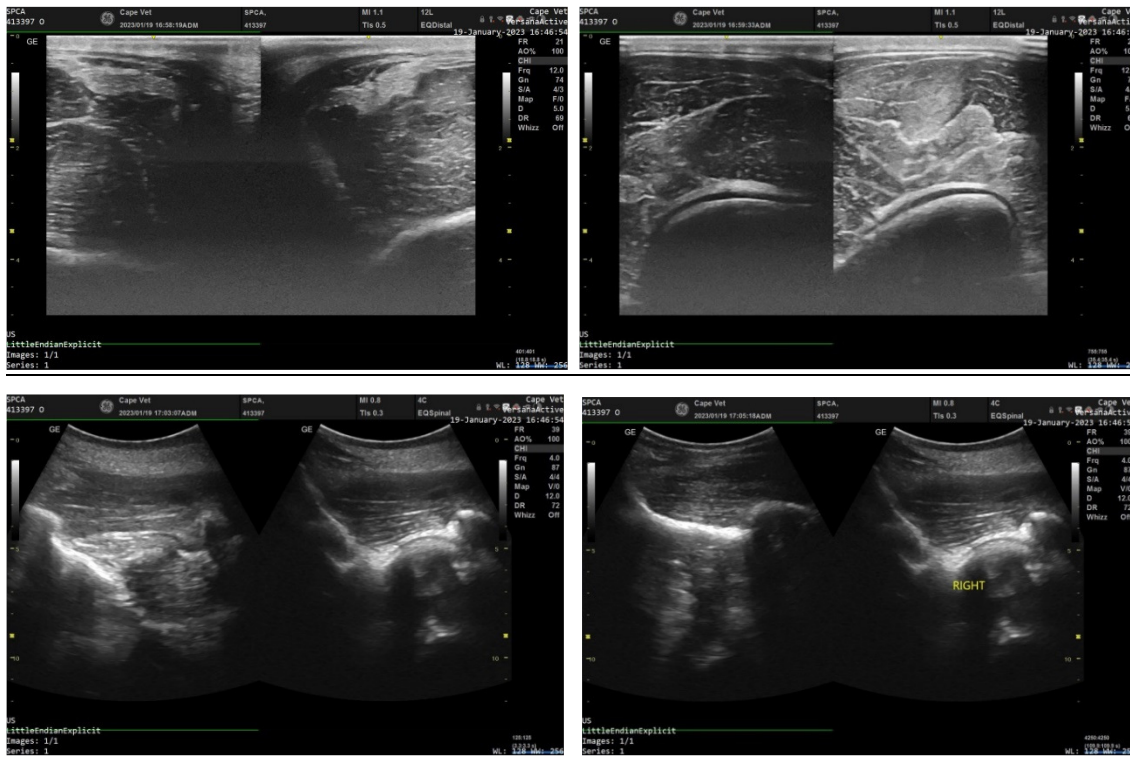


Fig2

Increase in the echogenicity and thickness of the synovial lining of the caudal nuchal bursa and increase in the fluid in the bursa evident in both the left and right bursae. Fig 2. No obvious morphological changes to the nuchal ligament.

Animal Details:

SPCA admission number: 413395

Species: Equine Breed: Hackney Pony

Sex: Stallion

Colour: Dark Bay

Age: 8 yrs

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Description: Dark bay with four white socks and ermine marks on all coronary bands.



Examination Findings:

The horse was clinically normal with a body condition score of 2. He was easier to work with and happy to be outside. His neck flexions were reduced; he was painful and nappy on the right. He would snatch food and try get out of neck flexion as quickly as possible. It was not comfortable for him. He did not object about palpation of the poll and both the rhomboideus and splenius muscles were hypertrophied cranially. His feet were in desperate need of trimming and shoeing was overdue. The hooves were cracked and shoes were loose. There is symmetrical scaring visible on lateral and medial aspects of the fetlock joints in front, most likely caused by equipment.

Ultrasonographic Findings:

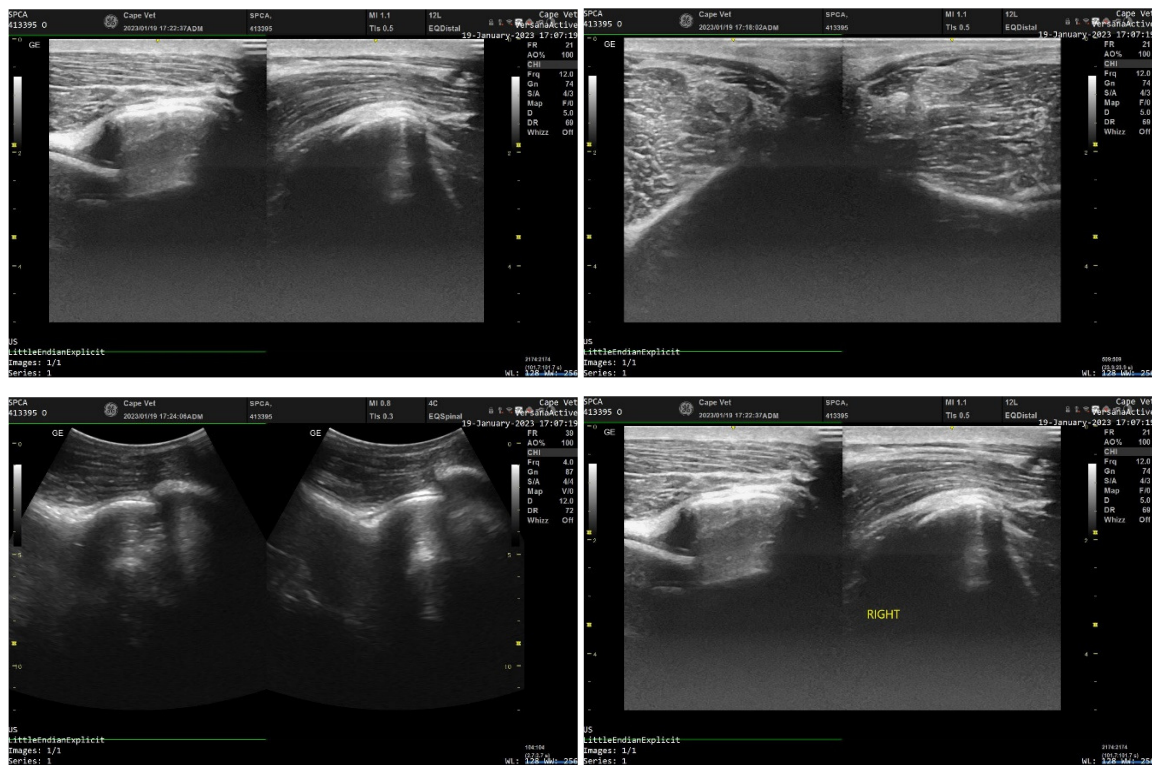


Fig 4

Increase in the thickness of the synovial lining of the caudal nuchal bursa, increase in echogenicity and lack of fluid in both bursae. Thickening and scarring evident in the right bursa. Fig 4. No obvious morphological changes to the nuchal ligament.

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Animal Details:

SPCA admission number: 413396

Species: Equine Breed: Hackney Pony

Sex: Stallion

Colour: Liver Chestnut

Age: 4yrs

Description: Liver Chestnut with left hind white sock and white star.



Examination Findings:

The horse was clinically normal with a body condition score of 2.5. He was easy to work with and his neck flexions were normal, but he resented palpation of the poll and both the rhomboideus and splenius muscles were hypertrophied cranially. He had marks and scarring around the girth from ill-fitting equipment as well as bony changes over the nasal peak from pressure.

Ultrasonographic Findings:

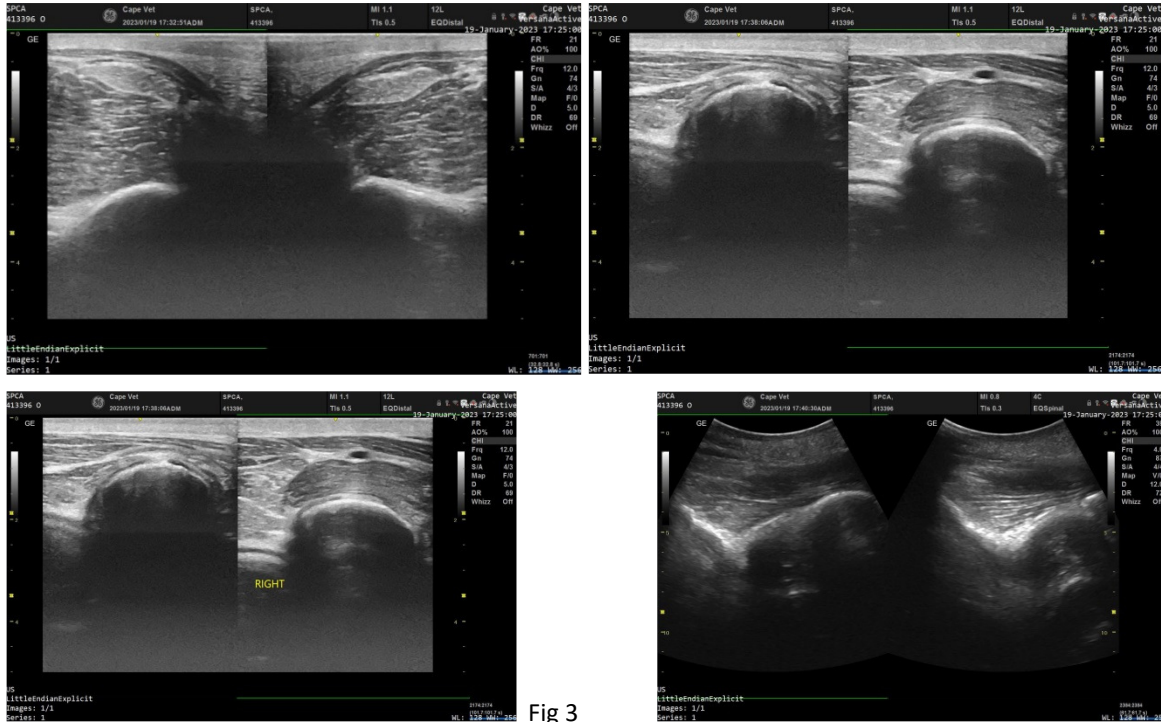


Fig 3

Very little fluid present in the caudal nuchal bursae bilaterally. Fig 3. No other notable morphological changes to the nuchal ligament.

Animal Details:

SPCA admission number: 413394

Species: Equine Breed: Hackney Pony

Sex: Colt

Colour: Chestnut

Age: 18 months

Description: Chestnut with two hind mid cannon and one right front white coronary band.

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Examination Findings:

The horse was clinically normal with a body condition score of 3. He was obviously more comfortable around people, engaging and interactive. He was more trusting and less anxious. His neck flexions were excellent, with good reach and holding the flexions for extended periods on both sides. No signs of anxiety or discomfort. He did not have shoes on, but his hind feet were due for a trim with mild cracking. There was some depigmentation of the lip, indicating ill-fitting equipment.

Ultrasonographic Findings:

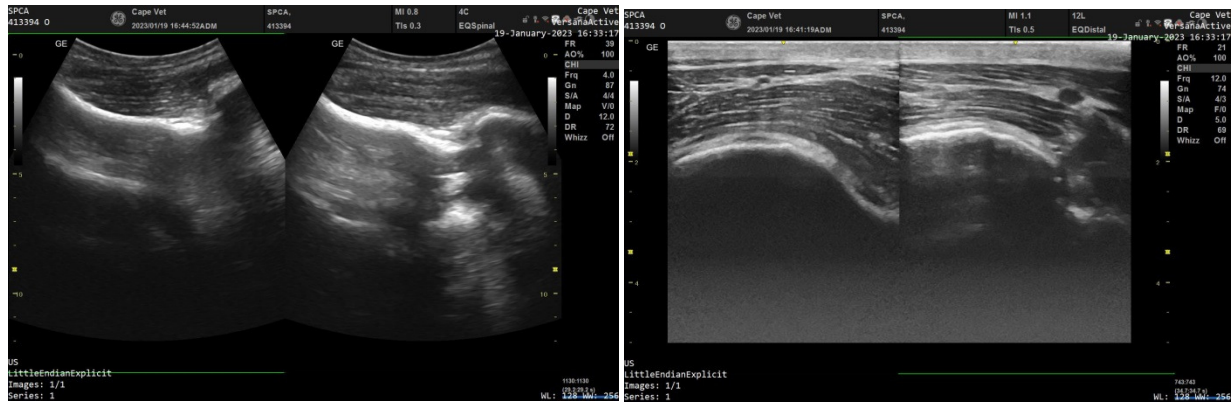
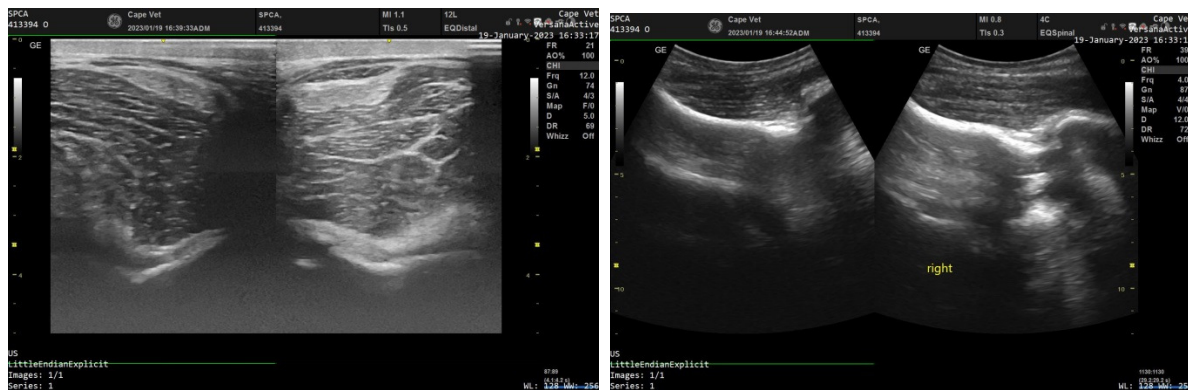


Fig 2



No obvious increase in size or changes to the morphology of the nuchal ligament and a normal echogenicity of the synovial lining of the caudal nuchal bursa bilaterally (Fig 2). No accumulation of fluid.

Comments:

No: 413394 has the least morphological changes to his bursae which follows considering his age and the fact that he has not been subjected to these training methods like his counterparts. It is interesting to note that the longer the horses have been subjected to these training methods the more marked the changes are and the more scarring and chronicity of the lesions in the bursae. The horses become more fearful and guarded of humans, more painful on neck flexions, and more anxious in general. Nuchal bursitis is painful, these horses responded to the pressure on this area and pain releasing massages. Although not in obvious discomfort to the naked eye, living with chronic neck pain is a welfare issue and has led these horses to be anxious and distrustful around people, making this training method of tying their heads up cruel and inhumane.

Kind regards,

Dr Kate Meiring

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