

## **Short- and long-term postoperative complications after keratoma resection in horses: A retrospective study (2004–2023)**

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**Objectives:** Equine keratomas are keratin masses located in the hoof and are frequently associated with recurrent abscesses and lameness. Several techniques have been developed for their removal. The aim of this study was to report short- and long-term postoperative complications in a series of horses that presented with keratoma, depending on the surgical technique used.

**Methods:** The medical records of horses suffering from a keratoma or keratoma-like mass admitted to the Equine Clinic of Liège between 2004 and 2023 were reviewed. Medical history, clinical signs, x-ray findings, surgical procedures, and short- and long-term postoperative complications were recorded. Follow-up information ( $\geq 6$  months post-discharge) was obtained through a tele-phone questionnaire with owners.

**Results:** A total of 29 cases underwent MPR, while 17 cases underwent complete hoof wall resection (CR) and one case underwent partial hoof wall resection (PR). MPR was associated with fewer complications than CR. Moreover, horses undergoing MPR demonstrated a shorter postoperative recovery time to return to full work compared to those undergoing CR.

**Conclusions:** Although PR is a less invasive technique for keratoma removal, severe and extensive hoof abscesses preclude this approach. For this reason, the MPR was developed to remove the infected horny tissue while being less invasive than CR. Our study showed that horses operated by MPR have fewer postoperative