

Cryptorchidism (Rigs)

A horse is considered cryptorchid if one or both testes fail to descend into the scrotum. The cryptorchid testes may be located under the skin outside the inguinal canal or inside of the abdominal cavity.

Types of cryptorchid:

- **Temporary inguinal retention** – where the testes will descend to the scrotum by 3 years of age. This usually occurs in ponies.
- **Permanent inguinal retention** – where the testes are retained in the inguinal canal.
- **Complete abdominal** – where both the testes and the epididymis are retained within the abdomen.
- **Partial abdomen** – where the testicle is retained in the abdomen, but the epididymis distends into the inguinal ring

How to deal with a Cryptorchid case:

(1) Take proper history – This may be difficult if the horse was bought from someone w/o the proper history

(2) External exam – palpation or ultrasound (per-rectum) can be used.

(3) Palpate the inguinal rings (HAVE to be done under GA)

(4) Sx exploration

For a false rig, there would be a scar tissue and remnants of the spermatic vessels and deferent ducts

Treatment

Standard Sx approach –

(W/ horse in dorsal recumbancy under GA)

1. Make an incision over the external inguinal ring.
2. Locate the testicular tissue and manually remove it from the abdomen/inguinal canal.
3. Close the external inguinal ring.

Testicles can be removed via closed or semi-closed technique

Laparoscopic approach –

(Under GA or standing sedation)

1. Distend the abdomen w/ sterile CO2 gas.
2. Make a small incision in the flank (standing) or umbilicus (GA), and pass a camera into the abdomen.
3. Locate the testicle, and make additional small incisions (to pass the instruments), and remove the testicle.