Methods of Physical Restraint

For Castration:

1) Standing:

- ➤ The horse is restrained in a stock/stanchion
- Ensure the owner handles the colt prior to surgery so the animal becomes accustomed to handling
- > Should be done in a clean, confined area (Eg. Stable) with adequate lighting
- > Use of a twitch can be applied while giving local anesthetics

➤ Advantages:

- ★ Avoids the risk associated with the use of general anesthesia
- ★ Cheaper method
- ★ Performed faster

> Disadvantages:

- ★ Possibly a more rushed surgery
- ★ Limited to use with open castration technique
- ★ Limited access
- ★ Not as sterile a procedure as general anesthetic

2) General anesthesia:

- Uses anesthetic drugs
- > Should be performed in a small paddock
- > The area should be clean and have adequate space
- ➤ The horse is placed in lateral recumbency with the upper hindlimb being drawn in a cranial direction towards to shoulder using a rope

> Advantages:

- ★ Provides surgical access
- ★ Strict asepsis techniques
- ★ Can be used on closed castration as well as semi-closed castration
- ★ Decreased chances of herniation
- ★ Allows for umbilical hernia repair

> Disadvantages:

- ★ Risks associated with the use of anesthetic drugs and recovery
- ★ If used with open castration technique, there is an increased risk of herniation



Positioning of the horse

General Restraint:

1) Halter and lead rope:

- > Halter the horse and attach the rope to the halter.
- ➤ Tie the rope securely using a quick release slip knot or have an assistant hold the rope if the horse is not accustomed to being tied. ➤ Never wrap the rope around your hand or arm



2) Chain shank:

- ➤ Can be placed through the mouth and attached to the opposite cheek ring
- ➤ Can also be placed over the bridge of the nose and exerted pressure results in the nose being pulled down



Placed through the mouth



Placed over the nose bridge

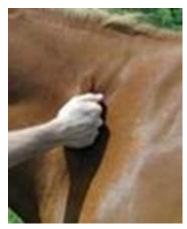
3) Twitch:

- > Wrapped around the top lip of the horse and mild pressure applied.
- > Severe pain from twisting the chain too tightly results in the horse pulling away or attempting to strike.
- ➤ Always hold the handle securely so that it would not be pulled away by the horse



4) Hand twitch:

➤ Grabbing a fold of skin from the shoulder area or applying pressure to one or both ears.



Hand twitch

5) <u>Limb lifting:</u>

- > Lifting the forelimb via a rear or front approach.
- > Always keep an eye on the back legs incase the horse decides to kick





lifting the forelimb and hindlimb

6) Stocks:

- ➤ Aids in containment of the horse
- ➤ Horses can attempt to jump out



(Information adapted from Years 1 to 3 DVM Skills Classes, UWI SVM)

References

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- 2) 7 commonly asked questions on how to use a twitch [Internet]. DVM 360. [cited 2020Oct4]. Available from https://www.dvm360.com/view/7-commonly-asked-questions-how-use-twitch