

Aspen Creek Large Animal Clinic
23605 Oehlmann Park Rd
Conifer, CO 80433

January 10, 2008

Harmony Horse Works
c/o Barb Wright
13639 Elsie Rd
Conifer, CO 80433

To whom it may concern:

I recently examined an Appaloosa mare named "Magic" that has recently been adopted by Harmony Horse Works. I treated the mare with dewormer and performed an equine dentistry treatment. Unfortunately I noticed that this mare had significant swelling around her right hind pastern joint and she is lame on this leg. Radiographs confirmed my suspicion that this mare has severe arthritic changes in the pastern joint, likely secondary to an OCD lesion present since birth. The level of arthritis in this pastern joint is so severe that I suspect that this mare will not ever be sound and comfortable without surgically fusing the joint.

Pastern arthrodesis (fusion of the joint) can be performed in a variety of ways, but I would suggest surgery to place several bone screws across the joint interface and then keeping the limb casted for 8-12 weeks post-operatively. This is a major procedure with significant post-operative care required. There are risks of the surgery (anesthesia and recovery) and well as the risk of infection or breakdown of the screws. Finally there is the risk that she may be so sore after surgery that she refuses to place weight on the limb and becomes at risk for support limb laminitis (like Barbaro). Despite all of these risks, the reported success rate for riding soundness after such a procedure in a hind limb is 75-85%. It would likely take upwards of 6-12 months to achieve soundness. Without surgery, this mare will likely remain in some degree of constant pain, and most certainly will be in severe pain if asked to work under saddle or at any gait more than a walk.

The exact cost for the procedure is difficult to quantify in this case, but would likely be in the range of \$4,000-\$6,000 including post-operative cast changes, antibiotics, and anti-inflammatories.

If there is anything else that I can answer for you regarding this case, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

Ashleigh Olds Diedrich, DVM