



Preparing Your Horse for a Bone Scan Appointment

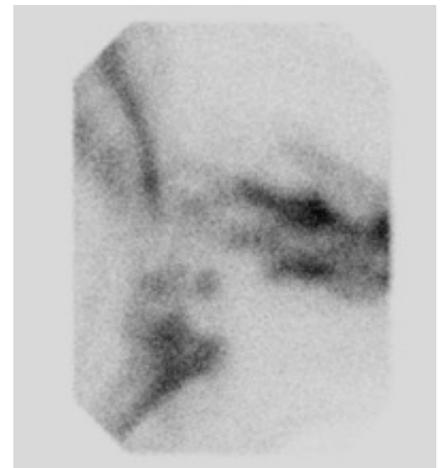
Your horse has been scheduled for a bone scan only appointment, which means that your horse is here for nuclear scintigraphic (bone scan) imaging without further tests or treatment. The bone scan images will be sent to you and your veterinarian when they are completed and a radiology report will be sent out within one week; your veterinarian will advise you on further testing and treatment after discharge. No preliminary results will be reported while your horse is hospitalized.

If you were expecting additional diagnostics or treatment during this appointment, please contact your veterinarian to discuss the possibility of a separately scheduled appointment with your veterinarian or with NC State Orthopedic Service. Our team of clinicians at NC State have specialized training in different fields of equine practice, including sports medicine and rehabilitation (ACVSMR), surgery (ACVS), and radiology (ACVR), each bringing a different emphasis to our goal of diagnosing difficult or complicated lamenesses and providing state of the art treatment.

WHAT IS A BONE SCAN?

Nuclear scintigraphy, commonly called “bone scan,” is an advanced type of imaging used in equine practice to help identify changes in bone metabolism that may or may not be visible on radiographs. Since many factors can influence the amount and areas of uptake, bone scan images are most useful in conjunction with a thorough clinical exam and gait analysis. Please discuss your horse’s history and your expectations with your regular veterinarian, as well as possible plans of action following the acquisition of bone scan images at NC State. The bone scan images themselves are just one piece of the puzzle.

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WHAT IS A BONE SCAN (CONTINUED)

On the day of your horse's bone scan, a catheter is placed in the jugular vein and a radioactive tracer is injected. This tracer is temporarily attracted to areas of the bone that are active, indicating a current abnormality.

Your horse is then sedated to make sure they stay extremely still while the camera measures the radioactivity emitted from their bones and formats a picture. Our radiologists review the images to identify what areas of bone have the most activity.

Your horse must stay overnight with us to allow the radioactive tracer to degrade and be eliminated from their body before going home. Our team of hospital staff will keep a close eye on them to make sure they are as comfortable and safe as possible.

HOW YOU CAN HELP US OBTAIN THE BEST IMAGES

To get the best quality images, especially in cooler winter months, it is important to maximize blood flow to better distribute the marker around the body; this can be accomplished by lunging (with your veterinarian's permission) and blanketing prior to the scan. It is important to arrive either the night before or early enough (no later than 7:30 AM) on the day of your horse's bone scan to allow time for catheter placement and lunging prior to injection.

Because there are a wide variety of problems that present for bone scan examination, please discuss with your regular veterinarian if your horse can be exercised in the days leading up to your appointment. This may also improve the quality of the images.

