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Case Study

A Case of Wound Botulism in a Foal Affected by Gastric Ulcers in Italy

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Abstract

The case of a 50-day-old Thoroughbred foal affected by sudden muscular weakness and failure to swallow associated with recumbency is described. The clinical picture suggested a diagnosis of botulism. At necropsy, nonglandular gastric mucosa presented deep ulcerations. No other macroscopic nor microscopic lesions were detected. *Clostridium botulinum* type B was isolated from the lesions of gastric mucosa, whereas the cecal and colonic content, assayed for both spores and toxins, were negative. Moreover, analyses of all potential environmental sources of toxins near the feeding areas were negative. It was concluded that the colonization of gastric ulcers may have contributed to this unusual case of botulism. To the best of our knowledge, this is the first case of botulism in horses reported in Italy, which is also the first case anywhere of wound botulism caused by infection of gastric mucosa lesions.

Keywords: *C. botulinum* type B; Horse; Stomach ulcers; Botulism

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