

PIGEON FEVER

Corynebacterium pseudotuberculosis

Pigeon fever is a vector-borne disease that is transmitted by flies from discharge of actively infected horses or contaminated soil by flies. The disease is common on the West Coast, and is an emerging infectious disease in the remainder of the US.

DIAGNOSIS



- Bacterial culture of purulent drainage
- SHI titer (blood)
- PCR testing (purulent exudate, biopsy of affected tissue, internal abscess exudate)

TREATMENT



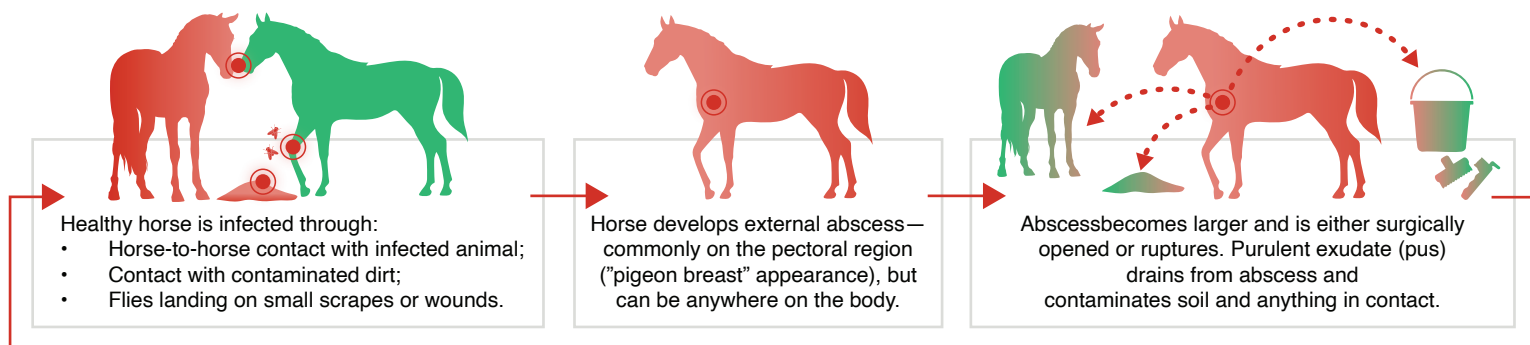
- Hydrotherapy for abscesses
- Anti-inflammatories
- Surgical drainage and lavage
- Antimicrobials AT DIRECTION of your veterinarian

PREVENTION



- Fly control
- Disposal of purulent exudate
- Consider isolation of horses with active drainage to decrease exposure of healthy horses with infected vectors

TRANSMISSION CYCLE

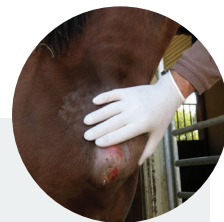


DISEASE MANIFESTATION

EXTERNAL ABSCESSES

External abscesses are the *most common disease manifestation*

1. Abscesses can form anywhere, but often occur on the pectoral region (“pigeon breast” appearance)
2. The abscess becomes larger and is either surgically opened or ruptures
3. Purulent exudate (pus) drains from abscess and contaminates soil and allows fly vectors to spread the bacteria



INTERNAL ABSCESSES

Internal abscesses (not pictured) are *less common* but require prolonged therapy and close monitoring with an overall worse prognosis

1. Clinical signs manifest in many body systems:
 - i. Poor appetite, lethargy, weight loss, colic, fever, respiratory disease

LYMPHANGITIS/VASCULITIS

Lymphangitis/vasculitis—Infection and inflammation of the blood vessels, most commonly in the limbs. A single limb or multiple limbs may be affected.

1. Vasculitis occurs *less frequently than other disease manifestations*
2. Clinical signs:
 - i. Swelling/enlargement of the limbs (usually diffuse and encompasses the entire limb)
 - ii. Difficulty/inability to move the limb(s)
 - iii. Fever
 - iv. One or more limbs can be affected
 - v. Can mimic clinical signs of other diseases (cellulitis, purpura hemorrhagica, Strangles associated vasculitis, lymphangitis)

