Treating Cushing’s disease in horses using homeopathy by Dr. John Fudens HMC DVM PH

I am writing this article to describe how I treat this disease in life forms (humans, dogs and horses) with the emphasis on horses. Just about everything I write applies to all life forms both human and animals.

Causations of this disease.

Also known as Pituitary Pars Intermedia Dysfunction or PPID, Cushing’s Disease is a dysfunction of the pituitary gland. It is most common in older horses (18 – 23 years). It may be caused by a tumor or other dysfunction of the pituitary gland, or endocrine system in general, which in turn leads to over-secretion of cortisol by the adrenal gland. With Equine Cushing’s Disease, the part of the pituitary gland known as the pars intermedia, becomes enlarged and secretes large amounts of a variety of hormones.  The most notable of these is the stress-hormone cortisol which is produced in the adrenal glands. The endocrine system of mammals is controlled by the pituitary gland which can be considered the master gland of the body. It resides in the mid brain. The pituitary monitors the level of various hormones in the blood coming from glands like the thyroid, adrenal, ovary, testes, parathyroid etc. When it detects the level to be below normal, for whatever reason, it sends a hormonal signal to the gland to produce more hormone. When that has been achieved the signal is stopped. If too much hormone is being produce by the gland the pituitary shuts down any signal until it is needed. One problem with this condition is the pituitary cannot do anything about an excessive production of a hormone coming from a gland except to not produce its own signal hormone. This leaves the life form to be the effect of this over production of hormone in this case cortisol.

I would like to stop here and go in another direction for a brief period. I have seen all my professional life Vets and MDs getting it wrong when they test for thyroid dysfunctions. The typical test run is the T4. This test is simple, cheap and easily done by labs. Unfortunately it is mostly the cause of false positives to determine the health of the thyroid gland. This means the medical professional can use the false positive to justify the use of the dangerous drugs like Synthroid the trade name for the generic thyroid drugs like levothyroxine. I have treated many animals and women on these drugs and continue to do so. They all have serious health problems being suppressed by the toxic drugs.

To properly determine the state of the thyroid the following tests should be done. TSH which is thyroid stimulating hormone to determine the health of the pituitary gland. T4 both direct and indirect and T3 again both direct and indirect. Both T4 and T3 are produced by the thyroid gland.

Back to Cushing’s. In my 56 years of practice, both conventual and homeopathic, Cushing’s is just another symptom of the chronic degenerative disease both humans and animals have to various degrees. Conventional medicine labels each symptom as a separate disease to justify the use of drugs and keeps you depend on them by saying you have a new separate disease ad nauseum. Homeopaths do not do that. Symptoms are windows/doors into the chronic disease that we use to determine what it is and the best way to treat the patient not separate symptoms.

The clinical symptoms include the following either all or some.

1. Hypertrichosis  (long, curly hair )

2. Delayed haircoat shedding

3. Change in body conformation (muscle wasting and rounded abdomen or “potbelly”)

4. Decreased athletic performance

5. Change in attitude/lethargy

6. Fat deposits, especially along the crest of the neck and over the tail head

7. Laminitis

8. Increased drinking and urination

9. Recurrent infections

10. Abnormal sweating

11. Absent reproductive cycle/infertility

12. Neurologic deficit/blindness

Numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 8, 10, are considered pathologic for this disease. This narrows down the list of possible conditions to consider. The remaining ones can have other causations.

What I do to confirm the problem is as follows.

After a complete physical examination and routine bloodwork (CBC and serum chemistry) other tests can be considered. These tests include measuring the resting ACTH level, performing a TRH Stimulation Test. In all honesty I rarely resort to the tests but just know by examining the animal, seeing the symptoms above, looking at the environment and questioning the owner. I can pretty well determine I am dealing with Cushing’s. A big key is how the owner has raised the animal and the use of conventional medicine. Injectable vaccines (the biggest damage to the health of any human or animal), surgeries/anesthesia, drugs, poisoning, chemical, etc. are looked at and considered.

How I treat Cushing’s.

There is no known permanent cure only providing greater quality and quantity of health and life. I do not use the conventional drugs with their side and toxicity effects.

1. All conventional veterinary medicine is stopped unless there is a life and death emergency. Mainly vaccines and unnecessary drugs.

2. I make sure the feed is the best for the animal concerning protein and vitamins minerals. This is limited by the owners $ and the quality of the grass/hay available in the area.

3. I take a case history which means finding as much information I can on the mental, emotional and physical aspects of the animal. This is done by observation and detailed questioning of the owner. It always amazing how little an owner knows about their animal as they never look at them from a homeopathic view. This is understandable as a lot of people do not even know that much about themselves.

4. When I get all the data I need I do my research into what remedy I can use constitutionally for the animal based on the mental, emotional and physical characteristics. This is usually a polycrest which are homeopathic remedies that cover a large number of symptoms in quality and quantity. In other words I am treating the animal or human as an individual with symptoms not symptoms alone. Thus I cannot give a definitive remedy here as it all varies with the patient. There are over 4000 remedies in homeopathy. Because of the severity of this condition I also add a lesion homeopathic remedy to treat the disease directly. My only aim is to help the animal or human as best I can to achieve the highest quality and quantity of health. I have found only 1 remedy in homeopathy that treats this disease from a symptom basis. It is not common or easily purchased unless you are a professional homeopath. I am concerned about this remedy being abused by people who do not know what they are doing and have no extensive background in the use of homeopathy treating ill health. So I am not listing it here. If a professional wants to contact me I will tell them the remedy.

Here is case study I had years ago when my office was in Florida. A woman brought her dog into the office with a conventual medical workup. The dog had been raised all its life conventionally. The test results and physical exam confirmed Cushing’s. So I put this older dog on my program as listed above. No more vet med, raw/home cooked diet, a constitutional and the lesion remedy. The dog responded beautifully even better than I had expected. I moved to Idaho and over 3 years continued to send the program to the client in Florida. One day I get a call from the owner that she found a so called holistic vet around the corner from her. This vet was conventional but was using other therapies like ozone, herbs, vitamins, etc. The vet also called me and knew nothing about homeopathy. I told both of them that the dog needed to stay on the program all its life and if they take the case away from me (which they did) the dog would go downhill rapidly. Six months later I get a notice the dog died. All because of the stupidity and ignorance of the owner and vet.

Hopefully this article sheds more light on this disease condition and allows owners and health professionals better data to more successfully treat animals.