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Lameness

Lameness evaluation involves the determination of location, structure, diagnosis, prognosis and treatment options. History and physical examination of the horse are the foundations of any lameness examination and is critical before treatment options can be set. Hands on as well as visual observation of the horse in motion all contributes to the information profile. Other tools necessary for pinpointing exact location and structures affected are regional local anesthesia (aka nerves blocks or joint blocks) and stress tests. Radiology (x-rays), ultrasound, nuclear scan or MRI, are imaging technologies that may be employed to further define the injured anatomy. Once the lameness is discovered a treatment plan will be developed with the input of owners and trainers. Treatment options include:

- Rest
- Physical therapy
- Medication
 - Systemic
 - Topical
 - Intra-articular
- Immune therapies
 - Platelet Rich Plasma therapy
 - Stem cell therapy
 - IRAP therapy
- Shock wave
- Surgical
- Complementary therapies
 - Massage
 - Acupuncture
 - Chiropractic
 - Mesotherapy

Lameness is common place not only in active performance horses but also in senior horses where a life time of wear and tear may be causing quality of life issues. It is just as important to address lameness in the older horse as it is a active or competition horse. Improvements in diagnostic technology and therapy (including rehabilitation) are advancing more rapidly. Bristol Veterinary Service continues to be progressive with the state of the art changes now occurring in lameness medicine.