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EXTRACORPOREAL SHOCK WAVES TREATMENT (ESWT) IN PATHOLOGIES OF THE RADIAL CARPAL BONE OF THE HORSE

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Several works has referred to benefits of ESWT in orthopedic pathologies in man and in animals. With the aim to prove its effects in some the most frequent affections of carpal bone sin the horse, clinical and radiological follow up of 7 periosteal osteophytes and 4 chip fractures of the radial carpal bone treated with ESWT were examined.

The equipment in use (Swiss DolorClast Vet – EMS), has a pneumatic-ballistic generator that releases impulses in a radial (non-focal) way. Therapeutic protocol of 32 days of length, included 1 application every 8 days of 2,000 impulses at 2.5 bar of pressure and 8Hz of frequency, during which time the horses rested in box.

After third and some cases after second application, clinical findings in both kinds of affection included a distinct attenuation of the symptoms, especially the degree of lameness and the pain at the passive flexion of the carpus. Radiological improvements were less evident and limited only to cases of chip fractures. Training of the horses started gradually at the end of the treatment until all of them could run again. Mean time of recovering the original level of competition was 84 days for the chip fractures and 63 days for the periosteal osteophytes.

Even if more investigations are still necessary to standardize methods of application in the different affections, satisfactory clinical results induce us to consider ESWT as valuable non-invasive therapy in the chip fractures and periosteal osteophytes of the carpal bones of the horse.