



SOP 6.02 – Cleaning the equine perineum

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Purpose

- (1) The objective of this Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) is to provide guidance to the Charles Sturt University Staff on:
 - a. Cleaning the equine perineum for procedures like vaginal examination, artificial insemination, infertility treatment, embryo collection and transfer etc.
- (2) Many procedures associated with mare reproduction require the perineal area to be thoroughly cleansed. The aim of cleaning the perineum is to ensure minimal bacterial contamination of the reproductive tract during manipulation and examination while avoiding chemical induced mucosal irritation or gamete damage. Note: A routine should be established to ensure cleaning is performed effectively. Good technique is essential.

Scope

- (3) This procedure applies to any person who is involved in AEC approved projects involving cleaning the equine perineum.
- (4) All researchers and teaching staff using animals for scientific purposes must be competent. For definition of competency refer to Charles Sturt University's Policy on 'Animal Care Competency Training and Assessment'

Details of procedure:

- (5) Place the mare in a suitable crush or apply sidelines. Sedate if necessary.
- (6) Palpate the mare to evacuate any faeces from the rectum.
- (7) Wipe faecal contamination and lubricant from the anus and vulva with paper towel.
- (8) Apply a tail wrap and tie the tail up and out of the way. Ensure the tail is tied with a quick release knot so that it can be quickly untied if the mare moves excessively.
- (9) Place 6 to 8 pieces of cotton wool in a bucket with clean water. Have iodine surgical scrub and iodine surgical prep available.
- (10) The cleaning procedure is based on the "Clean-Hand-Dirty-Hand" technique. One hand is designated clean to enter the bucket of water. The other hand is designated dirty and is used to wipe the mares perineum. At no time should hands or material that have contacted the mares perineum enter the bucket. The aim is to maintain the contents of the bucket as clean as possible.
- (11) Using the "clean" hand remove a piece of cotton from the bucket of water and place a small amount of iodine scrub on it.
- (12) Transfer the cotton to the "dirty" hand and proceed to scrub the anus, vulva, and surrounding areas. Discard this piece of cotton once used. Do not return it to the bucket.
- (13) Repeat step 12 as many times as required to remove faeces and debris. Usually, two scrubs will suffice.
- (14) Rinse the anus and vulva with cotton and water only so that all traces of iodine are removed.
- (15) Using cotton that has been squeezed dry, pat the anus only so that it is dry. The aim is to stop water contaminated with faeces dripping from the anus and over the vulva.



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- (16) Repeat steps 12, 13 and 14 for the vulva only. Be careful not to wet the anus and re-contaminate the lower areas.
- (17) Dry the vulva using squeezed cotton from the bucket. Again, do not contact the anus.

Drugs, chemicals, or biological agents

- (18) Pain relief is not usually required for this procedure.
- (19) Iodine scrub
- (20) Sedation may be used if the mare is restless (Acepromazine, Xylazine)

Impact of procedure on wellbeing of animals

- (21) This procedure causes minimal, or no impact on animal well-being.
- (22) Videos may be used for teaching however live animals need to be used to ensure professional standards are met.

Animal care

- (23) No adverse reactions are anticipated as it is a non-invasive procedure and hence no special care is required.

Pain relief

- (24) Not required since the process generally causes minimal discomfort.

Reuse and repeated use

- (25) In a teaching/clinical/research context, this procedure, if required, may be repeated multiple times a day but generally not required more than 4 or 5 times.

Qualifications, experience or training necessary to perform this procedure

- (26) Demonstrator: Veterinarian / Theriogenology technician/ Equine Science graduates having experience with these procedures. Sound knowledge of mare reproductive anatomy involved.
- (27) Students: Procedures should be clearly demonstrated before students attempt them and they should do so under supervision from a competent individual
- (28) Recommended instructor to student ratio (1:<16)

Record requirements

- (29) Routine monitoring sheet recording. In addition, details of all equine use including procedures should be reported to the technical staff for documenting on Ardex software.

Associated documentation (including pictures if available)

- (30) None required.



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References and relevant links

(31) None required.