



# Turning Pointe Donkey Rescue

Quarterly Newsletter  
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## What is Strangles?

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Strangles is a highly contagious disease of all equids that conjures up horrible images as described in "The Red Pony" by Steinbeck in 1933. Strangles has been recognized as a disease of equids for centuries and gains its name from the fact that lymph node swelling in the throat area results in the airway being compromised with asphyxiation possible if the airway is completely occluded. Strangles is also known as Equine Distemper. Strangles is caused by a bacterium called *Streptococcus equi* subspecies *equi*, better known as *Streptococcus equi* (*S. equi*).

**Clinical Disease:** Although strangles is most common in equids under 5 years of age, individuals of any age are susceptible. Foals less than 4 months of age may be protected by colostrum-derived passive immunity if their dam has been exposed to strangles in the past. *S. equi* only survives in the environment for 6-8 weeks, but is maintained in the equine population primarily by carrier equids. Transmission is either by direct or indirect contact of susceptible animals with the organism. Indirect contact occurs by contact with a contaminated stable (buckets, feed, walls, doors) or pasture environment (grass, fences, especially water troughs), and by fomites (people, flies, birds, rodents and other farm animals).

Once exposed to *S. equi*, disease occurs within 3–14 days. Classically, individuals become depressed, and may go off feed depending on the severity of the fever. A purulent nasal discharge is common. Initially, the submandibular (between the jaw bones) and/or retropharyngeal (at the back of the throat) lymph nodes become hard and very painful, and may obstruct breathing ("strangles"). With the progression of the disease, the lymph nodes often abscess. The lymph node abscesses will burst (or can be lanced) in 7–14 days. Some individuals may develop a mild, short lasting disease without or with minor lymph node swelling and abscessation.

Classic strangles is rarely fatal unless severe complications occur. Some common complications are:

- Bastard strangles occurs when lymph nodes (l.n.) in other parts of the body other than the throat latch are involved. If these l.n. rupture in the chest, abdomen, brain, etc, they can result in sudden death. Bastard strangles can occur many weeks or months after strangles has gone thru' a barn.
- Purpura hemorrhagica is an immune-mediated acute inflammation of peripheral blood vessels that can occur with strangles or routine strangles vaccination. The damage to the blood vessels leads to a widespread severe edema of various parts of the body, such as the head, limbs, etc.

Other, non-fatal complications, include laryngeal hemiplegia, immune mediated anemia, guttural pouch empyema (pus in the guttural pouches). The guttural pouches are unique to equids and are dilations of the Eustachian tube. In some cases, the purulent material in the guttural pouch is not expelled and becomes dessicated into concretion called a chondroid. Equids with persistent infection of the guttural pouches become carriers and are a source of infection when mixed with naïve equids that have never had strangles.

In addition, recovered equids may shed *S. equi* from their nose and in their saliva for up to 6 weeks following infection. Hence, they need to be isolated from other equids or have nasal/pharyngeal swabs or guttural pouches washings done to determine if *S. equi* is still being shed.]

**Diagnosis:** Diagnosis is made by culturing a swab from abscessed lymph nodes or from the nasal/pharynx/guttural pouch of affected equids. Since *S. equi* is not a normal bacteria of equids, anytime the bacteria is found, it is diagnostic. In potential carrier individuals, a washing of the guttural pouch may also be done.

**Treatment:** Veterinarians disagree as to whether or not to use antibiotics to treat an animal with strangles. *S. equi* is highly susceptible to penicillin G. Many veterinarians think that treatment will impair the development of immunity and may predispose an animal to prolonged infection and to bastard strangles. Treatment of an equid in the early stages of strangles is usually effective and is not associated with untoward effects. However, treatment must be started when the equid first develops a fever and before the lymph nodes have become enlarged and painful. If antibiotic treatment is started after lymph node enlargement, the disease is often just arrested and will again progress when antibiotics are discontinued. If the disease is more advanced, then most veterinarians will not use antibiotics but rather will recommend nursing care and trying to hasten the development of abscesses (which can be drained) by poulticing. However, if complications arise, antibiotics are generally used and will need to be continued for at least 10-14 days.

### **Prevention and Control of Strangles:**

#### *Detection of carriers:*

Carriers can be identified either by culture or by using the polymerase chain reaction (PCR) test on material obtained from the nasal/pharyngeal/guttural pouch. Multiple samples from the same animal will be needed to give a reasonable assurance that the individual is not shedding *S. equi*. Animals to be tested should include new animals introduced into a stable or herd, or animals that have recovered from strangles. If a positive is found, treatment should be discussed with your veterinarian.

#### *Vaccination:*

Both killed and live, attenuated vaccines are available for the control of strangles. Killed vaccines, in general, are administered with an initial series of intramuscular injections followed by an annual booster. Adverse reactions at the injection site (marked pain, even abscesses) can occur. The killed vaccines do not provide complete protection because they do not result in the local, nasopharyngeal antibodies. A live, attenuated intranasal *S. equi* vaccine (Pinnacle™ I.N. by Fort Dodge) is administered twice, at a 1–2 week interval. It is strongly recommended to not administer other vaccines or injections at the same time as administering the intranasal vaccine as *S. equi* abscesses have occurred at these sites, presumably through inadvertent contamination. Other adverse reactions that may occur are submandibular and pharyngeal lymph node swellings, with or without abscessation. Purpura hemorrhagica may occur with both the killed and attenuated live intranasal vaccine. The live vaccine may also interfere with the ability to identify carriers, especially if using PCR as this test only looks for the DNA of the *S. equi*.

#### *Immunity:*

Most equids eliminate infection fairly rapidly (i.e., within 30 days after recovery) and develop a solid enduring immunity to strangles for years although probably not for life. In addition, animals that become persistently infected may secrete the organism in nasal exudate or saliva for months or years without any evidence of clinical disease and are the major source of infection for other equids.

#### *Control:*

Isolate clinically affected animals or identified carriers immediately and use isolation protocol when handling these individuals. Remember that the disease is highly contagious and that all items and personnel that come in contact with an infected equid are potential fomites. If an outbreak occurs during the fly season, precautions should be taken to prevent fly spread, including burning bedding or composting bedding under a cover to prevent fly contact. After an outbreak, clean and disinfect all areas and equipment with steam or an appropriate disinfectant, such as tamed iodine or chlorhexidine. Since drying and/or ultraviolet light will kill the organism, resting pastures for 4 weeks should be adequate.

No one protocol will reduce the risk of an equine or the farm developing strangles. However, knowledge of an individual's history, general farm and personnel hygiene, and quarantine of new or returning individuals for 3-4 weeks will go along way in preventing a strangles outbreak. In addition, the use of vaccination as part of a control strategy will be farm dependent. The decision to vaccinate should be

made with your veterinarian after evaluating your farm's risk of disease and the protective and adverse affects of the vaccine. Some risk factors to consider are the age of equids on the property, the movement of equids on and off the property, the use of the equids and biosecurity measures in place on the farm.

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- Thanks to all who have new donkeys in their barn. We are deeply appreciative of all the new, and forever homes of our donkeys!






<b>Adopter</b>	<b>Donkey's Name</b>
Linda Polzin	Gavin
Carolyn and Conan Brown	Louass (Lewis) and Morass (Chase)
Jon and Tamsie Haskell	Frodo
Dr. Jay and Michelle Lugthart	Beauty, Kiki, Daisy Judd
Deirdre Hunt	Cheyenne (Matilda)
Joy Cassar and family	Tabitha and Bubba Judd
Mike and Jackie Minges	Darryl and Darnell
Cynthia Ashley	Joni (Jonie Smoosh)
Ken and Mamie Foote	Pickle

- Thanks to all the volunteers who make TPDR a success!

<b>TPDR Supporter</b>	<b>In appreciation for:</b>
Nancy Eubanks of the Donkey Store	Donation of proceeds from "Big Ass Fan" merchandise sold at Great American Donkey Sale
Celeste and Samantha Wiltse	Generous gift to the rescue
Carolynn Brown	The beautiful stained glass piece she made and etched with our rescue's name and two injured donkey's
Molly Breslin, Sandy Stroh, and Mary McBride	A donation in honor of their friend Joan Kingsley who is celebrating her birthday and loves donkeys
Mooreland Partners LLC and Tammy-Lynne Venneri	Their substantial donation to TPDR and the pride of being chosen to receive the donation.
Perry Ragon, DVM	Veterinary care for our donkeys
<i>Virginia Houston Hicks -</i>	<i>A heated water pail</i>
Kevin and Kate Ashley	Generous gift to the rescue
The Double M 4-H Club from Clinton County	TSC gift card
Chris Wilson	For our excellent TPDR website
<i>Sandy Bayshore</i>	TSC gift card
Dr. Gary Fouts DVM, Equine Veterinary Hospital of N.E. Indiana	For his for veterinary care of TPDR rescue donkeys
Bill Lute	His continuing & greatly appreciated support
Chuck and Lynn Ward	Transportation, housing, obtaining veterinary care, and watching their local auction for needy donkeys
Tobias Lehman	Continued help in training and evaluating and offering temporary housing for the TPDR animals
Amy Mc Lean of Sowhatchett Mule farm	Donation of STRONGID-C Daily Wormer and Insecticide powder
Ellen Dahlstet and The NMDA Ambassadors for The Breed Program	Donation honoring Marsha, Tim and Bambi Tanner Mendenhall of Rocking M Miniatures for completing the program

- Donkeys available for adoption:  
To see if your favorite donkey is still available for adoption, visit us at our website [www.turningpointedonkeyrescue.com](http://www.turningpointedonkeyrescue.com) or at [www.petfinder.com](http://www.petfinder.com)

Donkey name's	Pertinent comments
<p>Monty</p> 	<p>Monty is a 4 year old small standard gelding, recently rescued from an animal sale. He and his friend Winchester were both in the kill pen after their owner refused to pay for coggins tests on these great boys. Both donkeys have since been tested by TPDR and are negative. Monty is a quick learner and needs a home with someone interested in spending a little time teaching this great boy the basics. He has been in training at his foster mom's for the past two months and is very cooperative with everything that has been asked of him. Monty will make a great companion for another donkey and is very willing and eager to learn new things. If you are interested in giving Monty a new home, please contact Sharon Windsor at 517-623-0000 or: email <a href="mailto:akaminidonkeys@michcom.net">akaminidonkeys@michcom.net</a></p>
<p>Chester</p> 	<p>Chester is a lovable little mule with a great big heart. He has been started under saddle by Marirose Six. He is very willing and eager to please. Chester has been on the trails, thru water, along roads, woods, etc. He's been ponied, ridden in groups and alone. He has wonderfully smooth gaits. He will be a nice saddle mule for a kid or small adult who knows how to ride. He will test you simply because he is young and green. If you are interested in Chester please contact Marirose Six, (616) 682-0779 or <a href="mailto:msix0779@esagelink.com">msix0779@esagelink.com</a></p>
<p>Melissa</p> 	<p>Melissa is a large standard donkey. She came to us pregnant and just recently lost her foal. At her foster home, she has learned to trust people again. She used to be afraid of gates, but has overcome that! She loves men! She loves to be brushed and loves to go for walks down the road. Her foster mom really loves her and thinks she is a very special girl. Melissa needs to be in a home with an adult and as little stress as possible. She has been through a lot this past year and probably is not a good candidate for someone with children or lots of commotion. For more information, contact Sharon 517-623-0000 or email her at <a href="mailto:akaminidonkeys@michcom.net">akaminidonkeys@michcom.net</a> or contact Robyn at 269-598-8822.</p>
<p>Paco</p>  <p>Conrad</p> 	<p>Conrad and Paco were adopted together 15 months ago, and have had the most wonderful home, until a very short time ago when personal circumstances at their home forced their owners to return them to TPDR. Their owners were devastated to lose these two but personal reasons dictate that they must find new homes for these two gorgeous boys. Conrad and Paco must be adopted as a pair! Their last home was a very caring one and their next one must be as well. Conrad is a 4yr old black standard gelding. He has very heavy bone and a wonderful temperament. We can't say enough nice things about this big guy, shhh, don't tell the others, but he's definitely a favorite! Conrad is inquisitive, curious, and super friendly Conrad loves treats, leads and is confident enough to be a wonderful companion for horses. He'd love to keep company with any equine and will make some lucky family a wonderful pet. Paco is a 5yr old red roan standard donkey gelding. He came from a St Johns auction and someone has definitely worked with this boy before. He is pretty good for leading and even accepts people on his back for riding, though we don't think he's been trained for it. He's a favorite with the kids and lets them hug him all over and even hang onto his legs. Paco is the first one up to you in the pasture and he just adores people! If you are interested in giving Conrad and Paco a new home please contact Sharon Windsor at 517-623-0000 or email her at: <a href="mailto:akaminidonkeys@michcom.net">akaminidonkeys@michcom.net</a></p>

<p>Marty</p> 	<p>Marty is a 5 year old gray dun standard donkey gelding who is a very attractive guy! He is young, ready and willing to start learning more. Marty already ties, leads well and is good with front feet trimmings! He's kind of a shy guy, but once the petting and brushing starts, he's all about it! Marty was adopted awhile back as guardians for a large flock of sheep, but Marty proved to be a bit too aggressive with the woolies so came back to TPDR. He will make an excellent companion for other equines. If you are interested in giving Marty a home or have additional questions about him, contact his foster mom Toni Jones at 269-792-1438 or e-mail her @ <a href="mailto:bozbulldogs@yahoo.com">bozbulldogs@yahoo.com</a></p>
<p>Jill</p> 	<p>Jill is a shy, mature, grey, standard jennet that is about 7 years old. With the quiet kindness that she has received in her foster home, she is becoming as much of a treat-demander as Joni when anyone approaches. Nevertheless, she needs someone with plenty of time, patience and an understanding of equine behavior. Jill ties, loads and leads, but continues to work on her confidence when being led in new settings or having her feet handled. Jill gets along well with other donkeys and would make a wonderful companion for another donkey or horse. For more information, contact Tia at 810-797-2229</p>
<p>Winchester</p> 	<p>Little Winchester is a high stepping, adorable little brown gelding standard. He doesn't seem to have been abused as much as neglected. When he arrived at his foster home, he didn't know much about humans and was extremely shy, but he is losing that shyness after some time at his foster farm. He definitely needs a home where he will be given lots of attention. He is learning the basics right now and does quite well as long as he is not overwhelmed. For more information, contact Sharon at 517-623-0000 or email <a href="mailto:akaminidonkeys@michcom.net">akaminidonkeys@michcom.net</a></p>
<p>R.J.</p> 	<p>Poor Little R.J.! We found him late last fall at an exotic animal auction, just 2-3 months old at the time. It was evident that he had been separated from his mother and this poor little boy was completely terrified. He had been placed in a gang pen with about 20 other jacks ranging from youngsters to mature and aggressive adults. He had no mother to protect him. When R.J. arrived at his foster home, he repeatedly tried to escape from his enclosure, frantically searching for his mother. Luck was with R.J; for we also brought home a sweet youngster that we have named Russell. Russell has bonded with R.J. and provided him the permanent companionship this little donkey needed. <b><u>R.J. and Russell must be placed together</u></b></p>
<p>Russell</p> 	<p>Russell also came to TPDR from the same exotic animal auction. He's a small standard donkey, between 6 and 9 months old with very nice markings and a sweet temperament. Russell is inquisitive and likes to sniff everything. He's getting friendlier and likes to be a leader when in a group setting. He's protective of R.J, very nurturing. This is one sweet little boy! He will do great with a non aggressive equine pal <b><u>R.J. and Russell must be placed together</u></b> .</p>

- We enjoyed seeing everyone at the **International Stallion Exhibition and Trade Show** in March at **MSU Pavilion, East Lansing, Michigan**. We hope to see you all again next year as this will likely be the TPDR's only expo next year.
- It is with sadness that we inform you that we will miss seeing you at the North American Horse Spectacular this fall. This expo was the first expo that TPDR attended after its formation and holds a special place in our hearts. It has been a great place to meet both old and new friends. However, the producers of the expo have decided to cancel this event indefinitely.

- Do you have a desire to help and have some extra time?
  - Are you a great organizer with some extra time? There are always things to be done! Contact Sharon at [akaminiaturedonkeys@michcom.net](mailto:akaminiaturedonkeys@michcom.net)
- What a Rescue is all about!



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**R.J. and Russell must be placed together** and will only be placed in the most loving and understanding of homes that will assure us that they will never be abandoned again.

Wouldn't you like to give R.J. and Russell their new forever home?