



Lecture title: Causes of sudden Death

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Summary: Causes of sudden death in Equine

1. Cardiovascular Causes

- Ruptured aorta or aneurysm – sudden internal bleeding, often during exertion.
- Heart failure or arrhythmias – especially in racehorses under stress.

2. Respiratory Causes

- Pulmonary hemorrhage – common in performance horses; may be massive and fatal.
- Severe allergic reactions – e.g., anaphylaxis from drugs or insect bites.

3. Gastrointestinal Causes

- Severe colic – due to volvulus, torsion, or strangulating lipoma, leading to shock.
- Cecal or gastric rupture – sudden peritonitis and death.

4. Neurological Causes

- Trauma – such as skull fractures from falls or kicks.
- Seizure-related injuries – especially in horses with epilepsy.



5. Toxicological Causes

- Plant or chemical toxins – e.g., yew, oleander, organophosphates.
- Endotoxemia – from bacterial infections, leading to shock.

6. Infectious Diseases

- Anthrax – sudden death with dark, unclotted blood from orifices.
- Clostridial infections – e.g., *Clostridium perfringens* or tetani.
- Equine herpesvirus-1 (EHV-1) – may cause rapid neurological decline.

7. Other

- Lightning strike
- Heat stroke or exertional myopathy
- Air embolism or embolic infarcts