Dourine of horses

**Susceptible species**
Horses and other equids are considered to be natural primary hosts. Laboratory rodents (rats, mice, rabbits) and dogs are susceptible to experimental infection.

**Distribution area**
It is assumed that the pathogen occurs in Southern and Southeastern Europe, parts of the Middle East, Asia, Africa, and South America. Germany has been free of dourine for many decades.

**Causative agent**
Dourine is caused by *Trypanosoma (T.) equiperdum*, a protozoan parasite. The taxonomic classification of the pathogen within the order Trypanosomatida is the subject of scientific investigations.

**Transmission**
Dourine is a classical venereal disease. Transmission of the pathogen occurs exclusively during coitus.

**Clinical picture**
The severity of disease can vary from fatal outcome to spontaneous remission. Animals that survive the disease can become latent carriers. In acute cases, duration of the disease is two months, a chronic mild form can persists for several years. The clinical course is characterized by periodic episodes of fever, local edema of the genital organs and the udder, local edema of the skin, paralysis of nerves (head, extremities), movement disorders, weight loss, emaciation, and anemia.

**Diagnostics**
Detection of specific antibodies in blood serum is done by complement binding reaction, indirect fluorescence antibody test or ELISA. Direct pathogen detection is only possible in the acute phase of disease.

For further information see: Official [Collection of Methods of FLI](#)
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Similar clinical pictures

Other viral, bacterial or parasitic pathogens can cause similar clinical pictures, e.g. coital exanthema, equine viral arteritis, equine infectious anemia, hemorrhagic purpura (strangles-related complication), contagious equine metritis, anthrax, surra (*T. evansi*), Nagana (*T. brucei brucei*), but also malnutrition, helminthosis, tooth problems and other chronic infections.

Control


Further information see: National Reference Laboratory for Dourine

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