

Management and Treatment of Back Sore Wound on Donkey at Demote Gale Veterinary Clinic, Wolaita Zone, Southern Ethiopia

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Abstract

A four years age male (jack) Donkey from wolaita Zone zagare kebele was presented to Damot Gale woreda Veterinary clinic on 02 February 2022, with the history of wound on the back; improper harnessing, padding, overloading and overworking. The main clinical signs were wound on back due to overloading for long distances without proper harness (padding) were the most cause of donkeys back sore wound. This case revealed that there is no variation in the treatment offered to donkeys with different risk factors sex, age, cause of sore and body condition score. Majority of donkeys with back sore wound was not gained any treatment. This infers that back sore is the major health and welfare problems of donkeys that compromise performances of working donkeys. After Bathe the wound with cold, clean water and ensuring treatments (wound spray) and procaine penicillin the wound of donkey heals in the best possible way followed by donkeys with the back sore should get sufficient rest and Regular and continuous community education about the proper use of harness on their donkeys should be given.

Keywords: Back sore • Donkey • Wound

Introduction

Donkeys are commonly used to transport different products such as crops, vegetables, water, fuel wood and livestock feed. Despite the donkeys' invaluable contributions to the people in Ethiopia the donkey is the most neglected animal and has a very low status. Many of the working donkeys are owned by poor people and the animals' needs are often ignored. The donkeys are forced to work in harsh environments without sufficient resources (e.g. food, veterinary treatment and shelter) and appropriate equipment may not be prioritized. Studies have shown that working donkeys suffers from animal welfare problems such as gait abnormality, joint swelling, broken skin, deep lesions and dental problems [1]. Due to the increasing population and the undeveloped infrastructure the demand of working donkeys will most likely increase. It will still take many years to develop the infrastructure in Ethiopia due to the characteristics of the terrain and the low economic status of the country. Because of this, it is very important to manage the health and welfare problems associated with working donkeys, not only for the welfare of the animals but also for the livelihood for the people who own them.

Donkeys are mainly owned by small-scale farmers and are used to carry goods on their backs or pull carts loaded with goods as

firewood, animal feed, grains, water and building material. Each day thousands of donkeys enter Addis Ababa and other urban cities in Ethiopia, carrying different products. Farmers that can afford cart or pack animals get higher prices for their crops when transporting it by themselves to markets, because they avoid paying margins to traders. Compared to motor vehicles, animals are slower and do not have the same carrying capacity, but the animals have other advantages.

The prevalence of donkey wound vary significantly among sex, age categories and body condition score of animals. Higher prevalence of wound was recorded in male, old donkeys followed by adults and young. The highest rate of prevalence was recorded in donkeys with poor body condition than those with good body conditions. The highest distributions of wound was found in prescapular region followed by mixed, back, hind limb, neck, chest, fore limb, shoulder and head. Donkey wounds were commonly distributed on the prescapular and back region. Out of donkey wounds reported abrasion wounds, lacerative wounds, punctured wounds and incised wounds in donkeys the highest prevalence of wound was caused by improper harnessing followed by biting, injury by horn, infectious diseases, over load, unknown, and falling. Generally, wound was a major health problem of working donkeys in and around Wolaita Sodo town and hence, a comprehensive working

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donkeys health programs should be implemented in order to alleviate the prevailing problem [2].

Working donkeys suffers from animal welfare problems such as gait abnormalities, tendon and joint swellings, skin lesions, ectoparasites, lip lesions, tether and hobbling lesion and dental problems.

When a donkey's health deteriorates, the owners use different treatment strategies. Studies in Ethiopia show similar results; most unhealthy donkeys do not receive any treatment but are instead forced to keep on working. Some owners take their donkeys to a nearby veterinary clinic or treat them traditionally. An example of traditional remedies that are used, by the owner or a local healer, is pouring plant juice or oil on the donkey. According to donkey owners, one constraint of donkeys is the absence of veterinary clinics. If the donkey is finally taken to a veterinarian, it is usually in a progressed stage of illness and has usually been subjected to numerous traditional remedies.

Case Presentation

Data gathering techniques

On 02 February 2022, Belete Ossa, the owner of a four years age male donkey from wolaita Zone zagarekebele presented to Damot Gale woreda Veterinary clinic, with the history of the donkey wound on the back region, donkey used to pull cart loaded with goods and sometimes carry goods on the back overloading with no proper harnessing and padding. This case was observed two weeks ago and no treatment was given [3].

Physical examination

During physical examination the direct observation of pack donkey revealed that clinical signs/symptoms of wound on back due to overloading for long distances and loading without proper harness (padding) cause external injuries. The parameters measured during examination; body temperature was 37.5°C, heart rate was 40 bpm and respiratory rate was 25 per minute (Figure 1).



Figure 1: Back sore wound examination on donkey.

Management and Treatment

To ensure this wound of donkey heals in the best possible way: Bathe the wound with cold, clean water to remove dirt and allow seeing the wound clearly. The cold water will help reduce swelling.

The wound fully cleaned and diluted using a gauze swab and antiseptic solution to remove contamination. The hair around the wound trimmed to help keep the wound clean. Debriding the wound of necrotic tissue or trimming skin flaps applying topical treatments (wound spray) and procaine penicillin (20,000 IU/Kg), IM, Follow up the healing wounds may cause irritation to the donkey self-trauma (such as biting or rubbing at the wound site) [4].

Results and Discussion

Degree of back sore significantly varied: in donkeys of different sex, cause and age but insignificantly associated with body condition score. This is most probably attributed to the fact that the jack usually pass time on work, physically strong and was vulnerable to the heavy loads that result in the severe degree of sore on the back of working jack than Jenny. Old age donkeys were extremely vulnerable to the back sore than the rest, as age increases the working time, overloading was increasing, and donkeys were easily predisposed to back sore.

The case history and physical examinations indicated that improper harnessing and padding followed by overloading and overworking were the most cause of back sore wound of donkey. Improper harness was identified as the major cause of injury in donkeys. Most probably due to carried materials on the back lower heat exchange and physiologically to overcome the heat donkeys excrete sweat. The excreted sweat moist the hair and skin and carried materials polish with the wetted skin result in damage of the skin as well as underlining muscles based on the type of carried materials and how long donkeys under work [5].

Conclusion

This case report investigated that back sore is the problem of health and welfare of working donkeys in the area. Majority of the working donkeys with back sore were untreated for both traditional and modern treatment.

Therefore, regular and continuous community education about the proper use of harness on their donkeys should be given. Donkeys with the back sore should get sufficient rest. Owners should avoid the overload and overwork of their equine. Finally, updated further studies should be conducted on the prevalence, economic significance and health and welfare importance of back sore in equine.

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