



# PALM BEACH EQUINE CLINIC

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October 2016 e-News



## Learn More About Internal Equine Medicine and Board-Certified Internist Dr. Peter Heidmann *by Lauren Fisher, Jump Media*



Dr. Heidmann serves on the board of directors of an international non-governmental organization called "BioRegions International", and has travelled to Mongolia doing veterinary outreach and education amongst the herders and horse trainers in rural areas of Mongolia.



As one of the top equine medical centers, Palm Beach Equine Clinic (PBEC) has the pleasure of working with many highly specialized, world-class equine professionals. Dr. Peter Heidmann, DVM, MPH, is a Diplomate of the American College of Veterinary Internal Medicine, as well as the Owner/Hospital Director of Montana Equine Medical and Surgical Center in Three Forks, MT. In conjunction with a busy schedule of managing Montana's leading full-service equine referral practice, Dr. Heidmann joined the team at PBEC in Wellington, FL, for the first time this past winter to share his expertise in internal medicine. Dr. Heidmann is scheduled to return again for the 2017 winter season.

Dr. Heidmann grew up in New England and in the year 2000, graduated from Tufts

University in Massachusetts with his veterinary degree. He completed his required internship at Arizona Equine, followed by a one-year surgical fellowship at Oregon State University. Beginning in 2002 to 2005, Dr. Heidmann completed a residency for Internal Medicine at the University of California, Davis.

Following his residency in 2005, Dr. Heidmann began his career with a private veterinary practice in Montana. Then an unfortunate turn of events quickly changed his new employment. Dr. Heidmann's predecessor in Montana passed away in a tragic car crash on the last day of the year, and Dr. Heidmann stepped up to continue to build the practice left to him. Over the last ten years, Dr. Heidmann has developed Montana Equine to include two satellite offices and six senior veterinarians,

plus become the leading referral hospital in the state.

As a Board Certified Internal Medicinist, Dr. Heidmann specializes in neonatology, infectious disease, and ultrasound. In addition to his core internal medicine interests, Dr. Heidmann's strengths also include advanced performance evaluations.

Dr. Heidmann was recruited by Dr. Scott Swerdlin, President of Palm Beach Equine Clinic, during the fall season of 2015. Dr. Heidmann's wife, Allison, is a professional jumper and enjoys showing at the Winter Equestrian Festival (WEF). When Dr. Swerdlin offered Dr. Heidmann the opportunity to join PBEC and spend the winter in Wellington, he jumped at the opportunity.

"It worked out really well for me, for family reasons as well as professional reasons, to come down and do internal medicine specialty work during the winter in Wellington," Dr. Heidmann detailed. "It is nice on the professional front, because Montana is the fourth biggest state, but the second lowest in per capita people. There are a lot of horses there, but there is not

a lot of specialty horse work during the winter, so it was really nice to be able to work with the caliber of athletes that are at the WEF and come into Palm Beach Equine Clinic.”

“The facilities are really nice, and I am excited about the improvements they are making, because what was already there was incredible,” Dr. Heidmann said, pointing out recent renovations that are currently underway at the clinic. “It is great to have those resources at your fingertips, not just imaging and equipment, but the staff and variety of expertise. In Montana, I have six or seven veterinarians to bounce ideas off of, and all of a sudden at PBEC I had 30 people with different perspectives, and different backgrounds, and training. You get to see different ways of doing things and see how things can be done even more efficiently. I really emphasize the staff as much as the bells, whistles, and equipment.”

“There are not a lot of us Board Certified Internal Medicine veterinarians, because it is perceived as kind of an egghead, academic sub-discipline of equine work,” Dr. Heidmann admitted. “But what we focus on, especially in healthy horses like the athletes at WEF, are performance issues. Two of the most common, classic, performance-limiting issues in athletes, and especially in sport horses, are respiratory problems and muscle problems, which can range from quite subtle to severe.

“Muscles problems can be subtle issues that involve mild tweaking in diet or micronutrients, or they can be more severe issues like a horse that ties up,” Dr. Heidmann detailed, describing myopathy. “Similarly with respiratory problems, it can be a mild issue where the trainer or rider thinks that the horse used to be better or just is not performing up to its potential. It can be subtle respiratory problems like shortness of breath, or loud breathing, or slow recovery after work, or it can be more severe things like respiratory infections.”

Muscle issues and respiratory problems are the two main areas of internal medicine expertise, but the specialty can include many other things, such as liver problems, neurologic problems (brain and spinal cord both), and the care of sick neonates (foals).

“With seasonal breeders, that three-month period in Wellington is a high time for foals being born, and there is really a great deal that we can do with sick babies to end up with a healthy athlete in the end,” Dr. Heidmann noted. “Many people do not even realize what is possible with sick babies. It is possible to recover a top-notch performance horse out of a



foal that looks quite dire.”

While Dr. Heidmann specializes in internal medicine, he and all of the veterinarians at PBEC are very knowledgeable and experienced in general medicine practices.

“All of us in equine work are put in positions where we are generalists too, but what I really enjoy about being part of the team at PBEC is being able to focus on my true specialty,” Dr. Heidmann acknowledged. “This is what I spent so much time training to do, and to really be able to go in-depth, not just with the performance horses but non-WEF horses that are in the area as well, is a wonderful experience. We can really offer a level of treatment that is relatively rare in private practices.”

#### **About Palm Beach Equine Clinic**

The veterinarians and staff of Palm Equine Clinic are respected throughout the industry for their advanced level of care and steadfast commitment to horses and their owners. With 30 skilled veterinarians on staff, including three board-certified surgeons, internal medicine

specialists, and world-renowned board-certified equine radiologists in the country, PBEC is known for leading the industry in new, innovative diagnostics and treatments. Palm Beach Equine Clinic provides experience, knowledge, availability, and the very best care for its clients. Make Palm Beach Equine Clinic a part of your team! To find out more, please visit [www.equineclinic.com](http://www.equineclinic.com) or call 561-793-1599.

#### **More about Dr. Heidmann**

Dr. Heidmann sees referrals and consults on cases from veterinarians throughout Montana and has served as an expert witness in many legal, welfare, and insurance cases. He served as the Internal Medicine Specialist for the 2011 Pan American Games in Guadalajara, Mexico, and participated as one of the founding veterinarians of Montana State University's Bioregions program to Mongolia in 2014. He is Adjunct Faculty at Washington State University's School of Veterinary Medicine in Pullman, WA, and Affiliated Faculty at Montana State University, Bozeman.

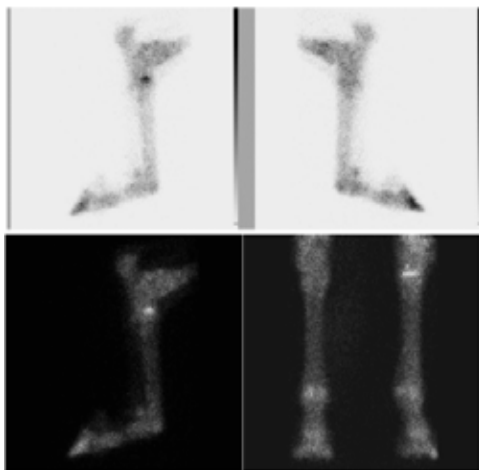
## Palm Beach Equine Clinic Continues to Expand Capabilities in Advanced Diagnostic Imaging *by Lauren Fisher, Jump Media*



Palm Beach Equine Clinic prides itself as being a consistent leader in horse sport medicine and continues to expand the scanning technologies to provide the best equine diagnostic imaging services for clients. In addition to state-of-the-art imaging technology available on-site, PBEC is fortunate to work directly with world-renowned Board Certified Radiologist, Dr. Sarah Puchalski.

Dr. Sarah Puchalski is a Diplomate of the American College of Veterinary Radiology whose specialty includes the interpretation of diagnostic imaging including Radiographs, MRIs, Nuclear Scintigraphy, and CT scans. Dr. Puchalski's job requires a high level of specialization to properly review imaging to produce comprehensive written reports for referring veterinarians. In addition to her full-time position with PBEC, Dr. Puchalski reads imaging cases for clinics all over the world. Many veterinarians and owners request consultation as a second opinion on Pre-Purchase examinations radiographs and ultrasound evaluations.

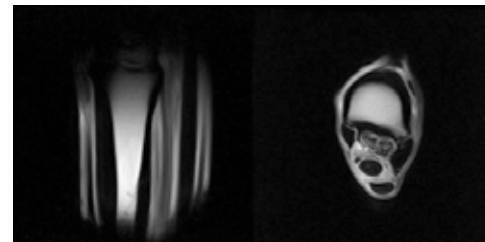
Palm Beach Equine Clinic has always been a



pioneer in advances of technology within the equine veterinary industry. Almost 30 years ago, Palm Beach Equine Clinic bought the first ultrasound for equine practice in South Florida. Twenty-five years ago, PBEC installed the first Nuclear Scintigraphy gamma ray camera to perform bone scans. Twenty years ago, PBEC assisted in developing Computed Radiography (CR) for horses. Currently, PBEC has the most advanced surgical and diagnostic imaging equipment available, including a standing MRI unit, MiE gamma ray camera, Digital Radiography, Video Endoscopy, and a bevy of additional diagnostic equipment.

"PBEC has a great case population and great equipment, which is a huge bonus for someone doing what I do," Dr. Puchalski stated. "The equipment is exceptional, the technical staff is excellent, and the case population of the region is obviously amazing."

Palm Beach Equine Clinic proudly offers an updated Nuclear Scintigraphy lab that houses the MiE Nuclear Scintigraphy gamma ray camera. Nuclear Scintigraphy is typically used to diagnosis injuries or bone remodeling within the skeletal anatomy of the horse. This specialized camera is equipped with sharper contours for precise imaging that results in accurate lameness diagnoses. Advanced software provides the ability to acquire high quality images despite small movements from the patient. This feature reduces the time required to complete a study, which provides quicker results.



Bone scans are also very useful in defining multi-limb lameness origins for the hard to diagnose, long-duration lameness cases. Typically, Nuclear Scintigraphy scans isolate points of injury to be identified further with other diagnostic techniques, such as Digital Radiology and MRI.

The clinic offers an inviting MRI lab containing the innovative Equine Standing MRI manufactured by Hallmarq, which scans the equine distal limb in a standing position requiring only light sedation. MRI is very useful to further define a suspected lameness origin by acquiring more defined images of boney and soft tissue structures.

Palm Beach Equine Clinic provides experience, knowledge, availability, and the very best care for its clients. Make Palm Beach Equine Clinic a part of your team! To find out more, please visit [www.equineclinic.com](http://www.equineclinic.com) or call 561-793-1599.

# Biosecurity and Safe Travel for the Equine Sport Horse

by Lauren Fisher, Jump Media



As horses are competing around the world more than ever, it is important for all owners to implement a routine for vaccinations and biosecurity protocols to keep their horses healthy. Many infectious diseases are easily transmitted between horses and spread quickly through a stable or showground if the proper measures are not taken. The veterinarians at Palm Beach Equine Clinic (PBEC) are very experienced with isolation cases and always available to discuss the important steps that should be taken to maintain effective biosecurity protocols. PBEC encourages owners to reach out to their veterinarians at any time for more information or alert doctors of a suspected potential risk.

The best first line of defense for horse owners is to maintain current equine vaccinations. Equine Influenza and Equine Herpes Virus (EHV-1) are two deadly diseases that are highly contagious and should always be included in a routine vaccination program. In the United States, it is now required for all horses attending a USEF competition to be vaccinated for Equine Influenza and EHV-1 prior to any event. Official documentation of vaccinations being administered within the previous six months

must accompany the horse to the competition.

Vaccination does not guarantee absolute protection against any diseases, and biosecurity measures should also be taken as added protection.

Biosecurity is a preventative measure taken to reduce the risk of transmission of infectious diseases by people, animals, equipment, or vehicles. Biosecurity is important at all times, even when an outbreak has not occurred.

Owners that use commercial transport for their horses should confirm that the trailers have been disinfected between each shipment. Trailers should always be well ventilated, and horses should be provided with fresh, clean water at all times. The stress of travel can decrease a horse's immune system, causing more vulnerability to disease. It is important to monitor your horse's behavior and health closely before, during, and after traveling.

Simple day-to-day practices in health care and hygiene are also very important in reducing the risk of contracting an infectious disease. Washing hands between grooming horses and regularly cleaning grooming supplies can reduce spread of infection. When attending a



horse show or moving horses to a new location, a footbath for all persons entering or leaving the barn at each doorway can be effective in disinfecting shoes to reduce tracking disease into the barn. If horses are showing a depressed attitude, have stopped eating, are running a fever, and/or have a runny nose, contact your veterinarian immediately. Early medical attention for an infectious disease makes a large impact on the recovery of your horse and the equine community's safety.

The best way to safeguard any horse's health is to keep the immune system strong with support from a suitable nutrition and exercise program. Vaccinations, a proper deworming program, and biosecurity practices will provide additional protection.

Contact your veterinarians at Palm Beach Equine Clinic for more information or assistance on developing an effective vaccination program and biosecurity measures that can ensure your horse's safety from infectious diseases. For more information, call at 561-793-1599 or visit [www.equineclinic.com](http://www.equineclinic.com).