



**Jeff S. Kerr, DVM**  
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### Pigeon Fever

Recent cases of pigeon fever or dryland distemper have been seen and reported in our area. This is a problem which tends to be seasonal, occurring most commonly during the summer and fall months with the peak of the fly season. Dry, dusty conditions also favor the problem.

Corynebacterium is the bacteria that leads to abscesses seen in this condition. Lesions develop slowly in the areas of the pectoral (chest) and lower abdominal areas. Pitting edema, ventral midline dermatitis, depression, fever and at times lameness may be present.

Treatment should consist of cleaning ulcerated areas, observing for abscesses to develop and mature as well as fly control. As abscesses develop and enlarge they will need to be surgically incised to establish proper drainage, antibiotics tend to prolong the disease process, the organism shows a poor response to them and are rarely used. Any discharges should be cleaned up and disposed of properly. No vaccines are available or effective for this problem. Sanitation and fly control are very important to prevent this problem.

Observe your horses closely for the next several weeks and call if you have concerns or questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jeff S. Kerr, DVM". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Jeff S. Kerr, DVM