

**Recommendations for the Diagnosis and Management  
of Pituitary Pars Intermedia Dysfunction (PPID)**

**EQUINE**  
**ENDOCRINOLOGY**  
**GROUP**

**2023**

## Recommendations for the Diagnosis and Management of Pituitary Pars Intermedia Dysfunction (PPID)

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### Introduction

Pituitary pars intermedia dysfunction (PPID) is a slowly progressive age-related degenerative disease of dopaminergic neurons in the hypothalamus. This results in hyperplasia and adenoma formation of the pars intermedia of the pituitary gland, which then releases increased amounts of ACTH and other related peptides (Figure 1).

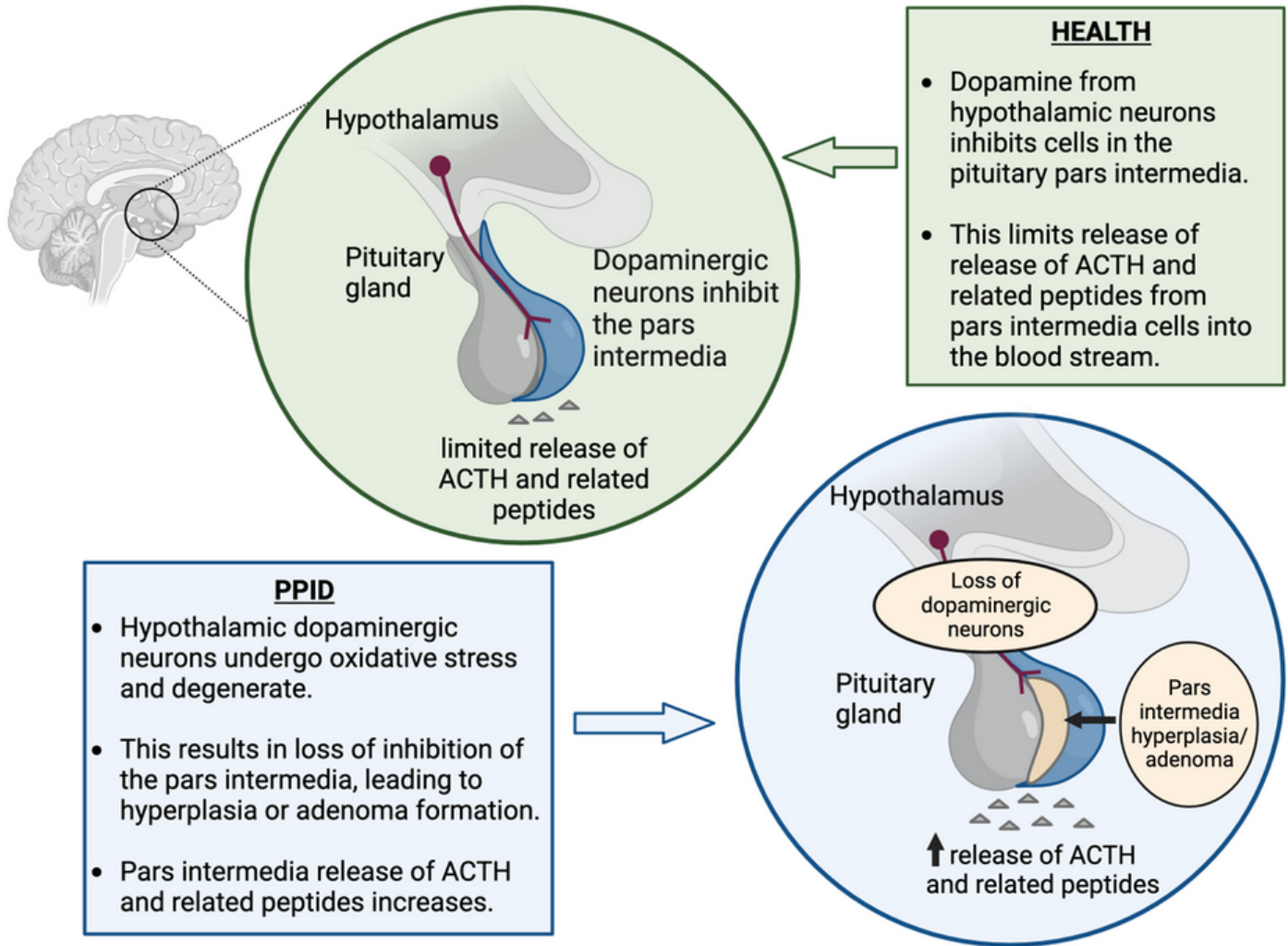
PPID prevalence increases with age, reaching 20% in equids 15 years of age and older and 30% in equids over 30 years of age. Hypertrichosis, a long hair coat that fails to shed, is a classic and very common clinical sign of PPID, but many other clinical signs are also described (Figures 2 & 3, Table 1).

Documentation of increased plasma ACTH concentrations at rest and/or after TRH stimulation testing is currently the most practical diagnostic test for PPID. However, season and breed impact ACTH concentrations, and there is some overlap in concentrations between healthy and PPID populations. Consideration of the clinical context of the patient (including signalment, severity of clinical signs, comorbidities, and intended purpose) and the season in which testing is taking place is crucial for accurate interpretation of ACTH results to decide whether to treat, monitor, or re-test (Figures 4 & 5, Table 2). PPID is often accompanied by insulin dysregulation so assessing insulin dynamics in concert with PPID testing is recommended (see the [EEG Recommendations for Diagnosis and Management of Equine Metabolic Syndrome](#)).

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**Figure 1 – Overview of PPID Pathogenesis**



**Figure 2 – Clinical signs and syndromes with PPID vary in affected equids**



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Figure 2 – Clinical signs and syndromes with PPID vary in affected equids (cont.)

Hair Color Changes & Patchy Shedding



Muscle Loss & Patchy Shedding



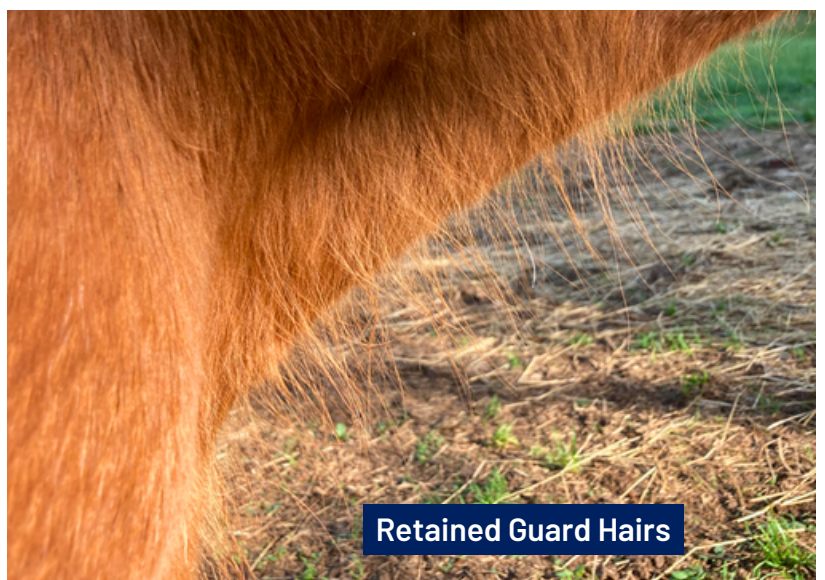
Chronic Infections



Hyperinsulinemia-associated  
Laminitis ("HAL")



Retained Guard Hairs



**Figure 3 – Clinical spectrum of PPID**

*Note: affected animals may have only one, several, or many of the listed signs.  
 Some--but not all--cases may progress from early to advanced clinical signs.*

	EARLY/SUBTLE CLINICAL FINDINGS	ADVANCED CLINICAL FINDINGS
<b>Strongly Suggestive</b>	Regional hypertrichosis/delayed shedding	Generalized hypertrichosis
<b>Suggestive</b>	Some loss of topline muscle Change in attitude/lethargy Decreased performance Abnormal sweating (increased or decreased)	Topline muscle atrophy Altered mentation Exercise intolerance Abnormal sweating (increased or decreased) Rounded abdomen Polyuria/polydipsia Recurrent infections
<b>Possible Comorbidities</b>	Infertility Tendon or ligament laxity Desmitis / tendonitis Regional adiposity Hyperinsulinemia-associated laminitis	Infertility Tendon or ligament laxity Desmitis / tendonitis Regional adiposity Hyperinsulinemia-associated laminitis Recurrent corneal ulcers Increased mammary gland secretions

**Practice Tip: Increasing animal age and number of clinical signs increase the likelihood that these clinical signs are truly associated with PPID.**

**Table 1 – Laboratory findings that may accompany PPID**

LABORATORY FINDINGS
Lymphopenia and/or neutrophilia (in the absence of infection) Hyperglycemia Hyperinsulinemia Hypertriglyceridemia Hypophosphatemia High fecal egg count

**Table 2 – Baseline ACTH and TRH stimulation test protocols and interpretation**

<b>Procedure for Baseline ACTH</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collect into EDTA containing tube (purple top) at any time of the day</li> <li>• Keep samples cool (ice packs or refrigerator) at all times</li> <li>• Centrifuge and separate plasma prior to shipping. Gravity separation of chilled plasma within 4 hours is also acceptable if centrifugation is not available, but ensure the non-centrifuged sample does not freeze to avoid spuriously high ACTH levels.</li> <li>• Ship via overnight mail with ice packs</li> <li>• Plasma can be frozen (centrifuged samples only) but avoid freeze-thaw cycles</li> </ul>
<b>Procedure for TRH Stimulation Test</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Horses can be tested after hay is fed, but not within 12 hours after a grain meal. Testing can be performed immediately before an oral sugar test (OST) but do not perform within 12 hours after an OST.</li> <li>• Administer 0.5 mg (equids &lt; 250 kg) or 1.0 mg (equids &gt; 250 kg) of TRH intravenously. Side effects after administration are transient and include coughing, flehmen response, and yawning.</li> <li>• Collect blood into EDTA containing tubes (purple top) at 0 and exactly 10 minutes after TRH administration. A second sample may also be collected 30 minutes after TRH administration if desired.</li> <li>• Cut-off values are also available for ACTH results 30 minutes after TRH administration (see below).</li> </ul>

**Table 3 – Seasonal interpretation of baseline ACTH concentrations (also refer to Figure 5)**

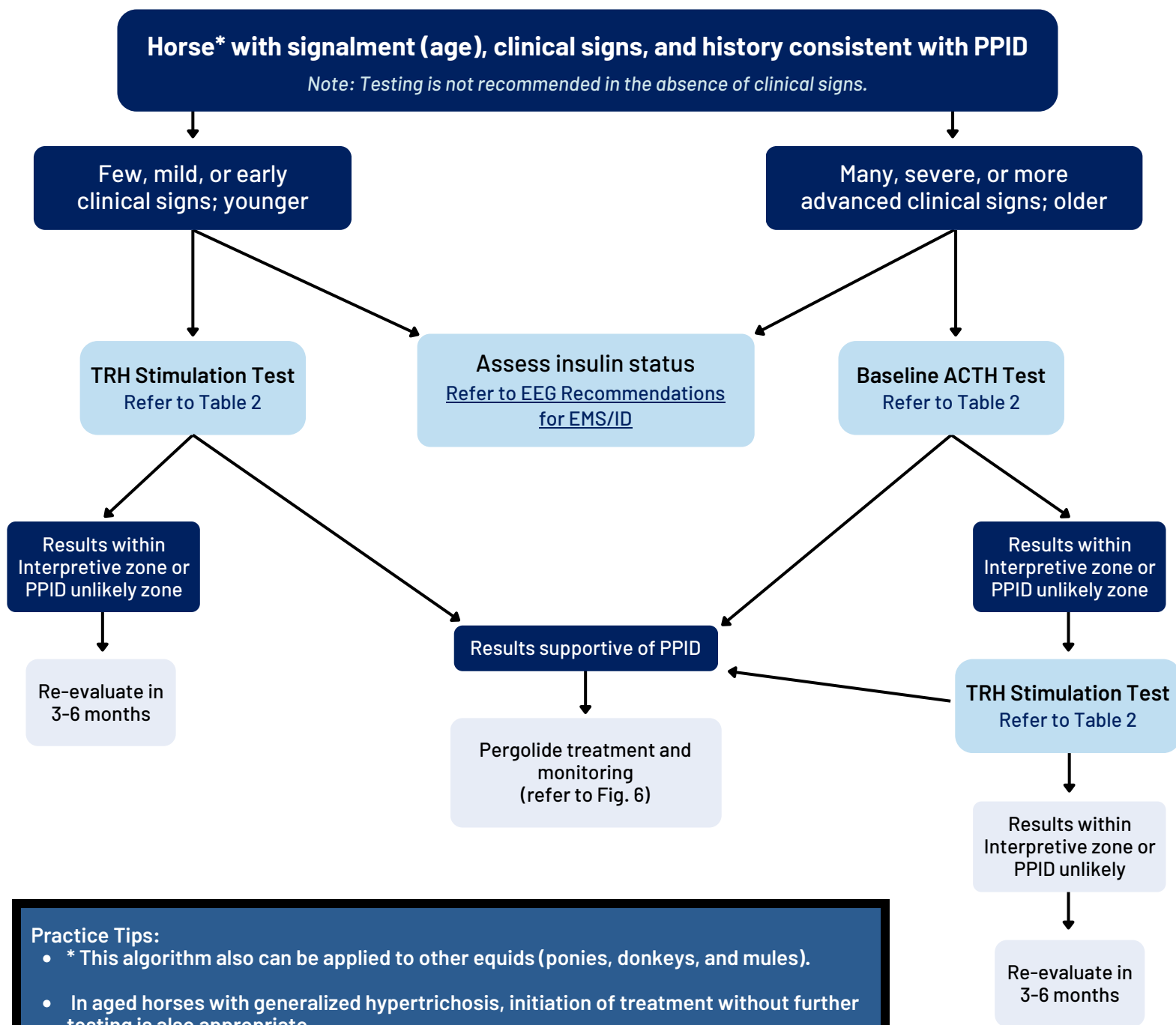
	Time of Year	PPID UNLIKELY	Interpretive Zone - Consider clinical signs and signalment	PPID LIKELY
<b>Baseline ACTH or TRH time 0 (pg/mL)</b>	Dec. - Jun.	< 15	15 - 40	> 40
	July & November	< 15	15 - 50	> 50
	August	< 20	20 - 75	> 75
	Sept. - Oct.	< 30	30 - 90	> 90
<b>ACTH 10 min. after TRH (pg/mL) *</b>	Jan. - June	< 100	100 - 200	> 200
	July - Dec.	< 100	TRH stimulation testing is most useful to identify negative cases in these months. **See below for more information.	
<b>ACTH 30 min. after TRH (pg/mL) *</b>	Jan. - June	< 40	40 - 90	> 90
	July - Dec.	< 40	TRH stimulation testing is most useful to identify negative cases in these months. **See below for more information.	

\* ACTH concentrations provided here are based on values determined by the Immulite 2000xpi analyzer. Specific months provided here are accurate for the northern hemisphere, but require seasonal correction for southern hemisphere interpretation. An alternate version of this table with ACTH concentrations reported in SI units (pmol/L) is included at the end of document (see Table 5).

\*\* Many healthy animals have variably exaggerated ACTH responses to TRH in the autumn. 10-minute ACTH concentrations over approximately 500 pg/mL in the autumn may be consistent with PPID in many cases, but much variability within and among horses makes it difficult to define discriminatory cut-off values for PPID diagnosis during this season.

**Practice Tip:** Healthy animals of certain breeds may have results that fall within the interpretive zone, or even the PPID likely range. Specifically, Arabian horses and donkeys may have variably physiologically higher ACTH concentrations in any season. Welsh and Shetland ponies often have higher ACTH concentrations only in the autumn months. Thus, PPID diagnosis should be made with caution in these breeds unless strong clinical signs also present.

Figure 4 – Algorithm for the diagnosis of PPID



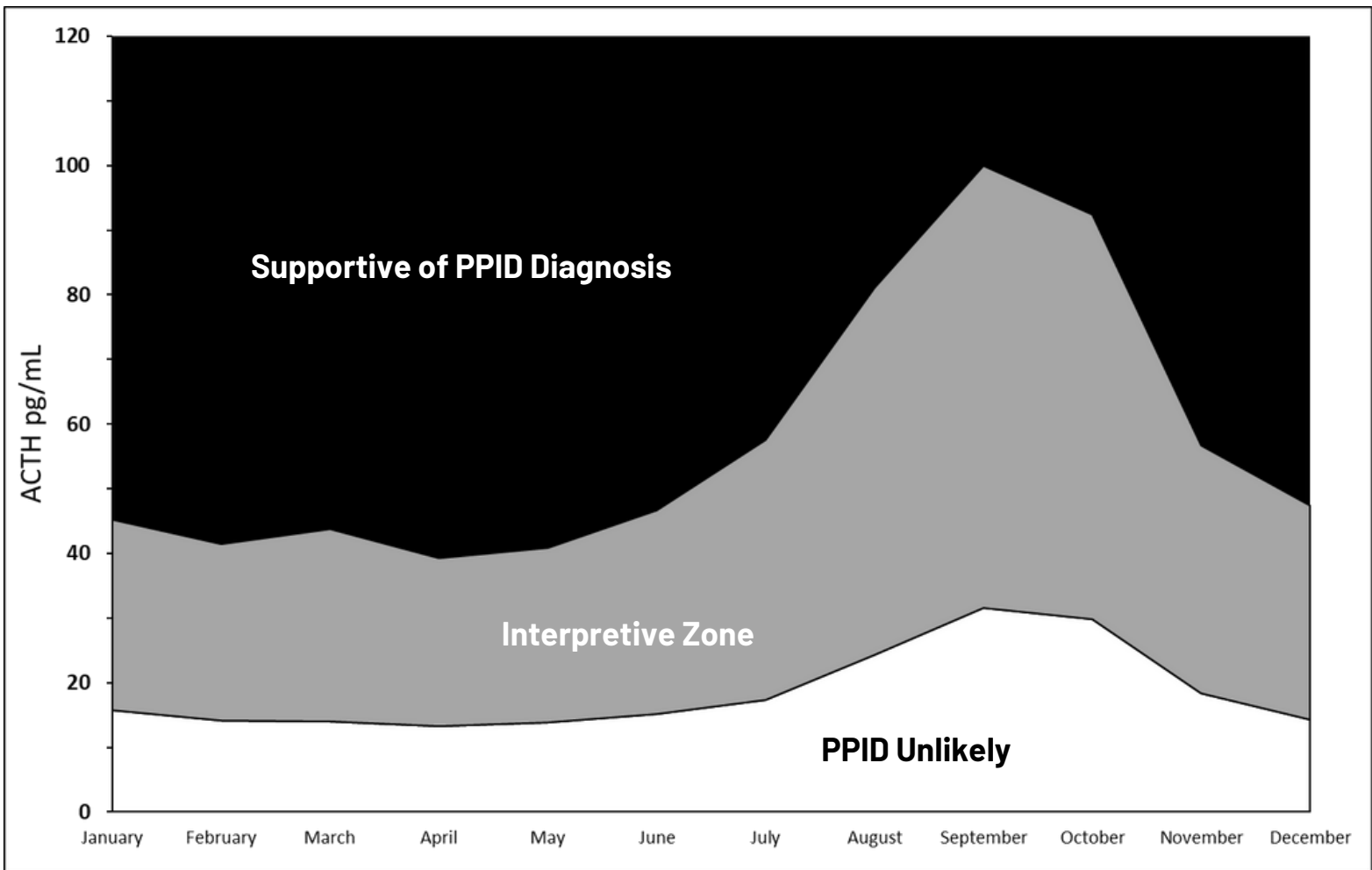
### Practice Tips:

- \* This algorithm also can be applied to other equids (ponies, donkeys, and mules).
- In aged horses with generalized hypertrichosis, initiation of treatment without further testing is also appropriate.
- If TRH stimulation testing is not feasible, baseline ACTH alone can be used for diagnosis, but may be less supportive of diagnosis in the earlier stages of the disease.
- These tests are not perfect diagnostic tests for PPID -- false positive and false negative results are possible. PPID treatment is rarely an emergency, so monitoring and repeat testing is an acceptable approach if the clinical picture and test results seem incompatible. Results are difficult to interpret.

**Figure 5 – Seasonal interpretation of baseline ACTH concentrations**

*Note: ACTH values presented here were determined using the Immulite 2000xpi analyzer. ACTH concentrations falling in the black shaded area are supportive of PPID diagnosis, and those falling in the white shaded area suggest a PPID diagnosis is unlikely at that time. ACTH concentrations falling in the grey area require further interpretation based on the clinical picture of the animal. The upper and lower limits of the interpretive zone were defined as thresholds that were shown to respectively maximize diagnostic specificity and sensitivity in a study using a large laboratory database of equine plasma ACTH concentrations (Durham et al, Equine Vet J, 2020).*

*An alternate version of this figure with ACTH concentrations reported in SI units is available at the end of the document (see Figure 7).*



**Practice Tips:**

- For older horses with many and/or advanced clinical signs, the lower threshold of the interpretive zone may be used for making a PPID diagnosis.
- For younger horses with few and/or early clinical signs, the upper threshold of the interpretive zone may be used for making a PPID diagnosis.



**Figure 6 – Treatment and monitoring of PPID**

### Initial Treatment Plan

Prascend® (pergolide tablets; Boehringer Ingelheim Animal Health USA, Inc.) is approved for treatment of PPID in horses and is recommended at an initial dose of 2 mcg/kg (0.5 mg for a 250 kg pony and 1.0 mg for a 500 kg horse). The dosage is not to exceed 4 mcg/kg bodyweight once daily according to the product label. Some horses show a transient reduction in appetite with initial therapy or dose changes – consult with the drug manufacturer or an equine endocrinologist for specific recommendations if inappetence is noted while on pergolide treatment.

**Evaluate clinical signs +/- endocrine testing 1-3 months after starting treatment, and then every 6-12 months**

**Improved clinical signs and adequate laboratory response**

No change in pergolide dose; reassess clinical signs and endocrine testing every 6-12 months

**Poor clinical response with adequate laboratory response**

Evaluate for alternate causes and consult with an equine endocrinologist or internal medicine specialist

**Good clinical response with persistently abnormal endocrine testing**

May increase or maintain pergolide dose; consult with an equine endocrinologist or internal medicine specialist

**No improvement in clinical signs**

Increase dose by 1-2 mcg/kg\*; reassess signs and endocrine testing in 1-3 months

Persistent/recurring clinical abnormalities

Refractory case; consult with an equine endocrinologist or internal medicine specialist

#### Practice Tips:

- Improvement in clinical signs and insulin status are the most important indicator of response to treatment.
- Given the impact of season on ACTH, monitoring in the same season from year to year is important.
- ACTH concentrations may not return to the “PPID unlikely” range despite clinical improvement, and do not always warrant a dose increase.
- Strategies\* used by the EEG for refractory cases include:
  - gradually increasing pergolide to 4-6 mcg/kg and adding cyproheptadine (0.25 mg/kg PO BID or 0.5 mg/kg PO SID)
  - OR gradually increasing pergolide to 10 mcg/kg

\*These dosages are considered extra-label in the U.S., where the manufacturer’s recommendations are not to exceed 4 mcg/kg daily.



**Table 4 – Other considerations for managing horses with PPID**

#### REMOVING HORSES FROM PERGOLIDE TREATMENT

In the event that a horse on pergolide treatment misses a dose, ACTH concentrations may begin to increase within 48 hours. Drug clearance varies substantially among individual horses and can result in detectable drug levels for much longer than 48 hours in some animals.

#### USE OF PERGOLIDE IN BREEDING ANIMALS

The safety and efficacy of pergolide in breeding, pregnant, and lactating animals has not been assessed. Group members are aware of pergolide use in a small number of breeding stallions and broodmares, but effects on fertility, lactation, and fetal development are not known. In pregnant mares, withdrawal of pergolide treatment 30-60 days prior to expected parturition may theoretically limit drug suppression of lactation or potential impacts on fetal adrenal axis development, but evidence for this approach is lacking.

#### QUALITY OF LIFE

The majority of horses with PPID are aged and therefore susceptible to non-PPID conditions. Therefore, horse owners should be advised that while medical management of PPID improves quality of life, it does not necessarily prolong lifespan.

#### WELLNESS CARE

In addition to medical management, horses with PPID should receive regular wellness care. Special attention should be paid to body condition, hoof care, dentistry, and parasite control. Inadequately controlled PPID horses are also at risk for bacterial infections. Adequate water should be available if polydipsia and polyuria are persistent problems.

#### DIET AND EXERCISE RECOMMENDATIONS

It is important to carefully monitor the weight and body condition in horses with PPID. Feed selection should be based upon body condition score and evidence for insulin dysregulation. Some PPID horses are lean and have normal insulin status, and senior feeds and pasture grazing are appropriate in these cases. Horses with PPID that are in thin body condition may also benefit from an increase in dietary fat and caloric intake via fat supplements and/or alfalfa-based feeds to support weight gain. Obese horses should be placed on a lower energy diet and be encouraged to follow an exercise program if soundness permits. Those with insulin dysregulation require lower non-structural carbohydrate feeds and limited access to pasture. Feed requirements of aged horses, especially those with PPID, may change over time and monthly monitoring of BCS by owners is recommended. Dietary supplements have also been suggested for the management of PPID, but to date scientific evidence for their efficacy is lacking.



**Table 4 (cont.) – Other considerations for managing horses with PPID**

### MANAGEMENT OF GLUCOSE, INSULIN, AND LIPID DISORDERS

Assessment for insulin dysregulation should also be pursued in all patients with PPID (see [Equine Endocrine Group Recommendations for Diagnosis and Management of Equine Metabolic Syndrome](#)). Insulin dysregulation is detected in approximately one-third of cases and is most likely a result of PPID developing in equids genetically predisposed to EMS. Less commonly, diabetes mellitus develops in horses with PPID and is characterized by persistent hyperglycemia and glucosuria. Hypertriglyceridemia is detected in some horses, and blood lipid concentrations markedly increase if the animal enters negative energy balance. Pergolide treatment has been associated with improved glycemic control and normalization of blood triglyceride concentrations in some of these cases with positive effects often seen within 48-72 hours. Attention should also be paid to the horse's diet and access to pasture (see previous page).

### TESTING IN THE FACE OF LAMINITIS PAIN AND OTHER STRESS

Stress, excitement, and trailering can result in a transient increase in ACTH concentrations. Samples for PPID diagnosis via baseline ACTH should not be collected within 30 minutes of trailering, or in an animal that is visibly excited. Low to moderate pain of at least 24 hours duration does not appear to impact diagnostic testing with baseline ACTH or TRH stimulation testing. Testing may be performed in laminitic horses, but it is ideal to postpone until severe pain is controlled.

### TESTING AFTER SEDATION

Sedation may impact endocrine responses. Diagnostic testing with baseline ACTH concentration should only be performed immediately (within 5-10 minutes) after sedation with xylazine or detomidine, with or without butorphanol, to avoid substantial impact on the test interpretation. TRH stimulation testing and assessment of insulin status are impacted by sedation for at least several hours. Thus, it is ideal to avoid diagnostic testing for PPID and insulin status for approximately 24 hours after sedation.

### Disclosures

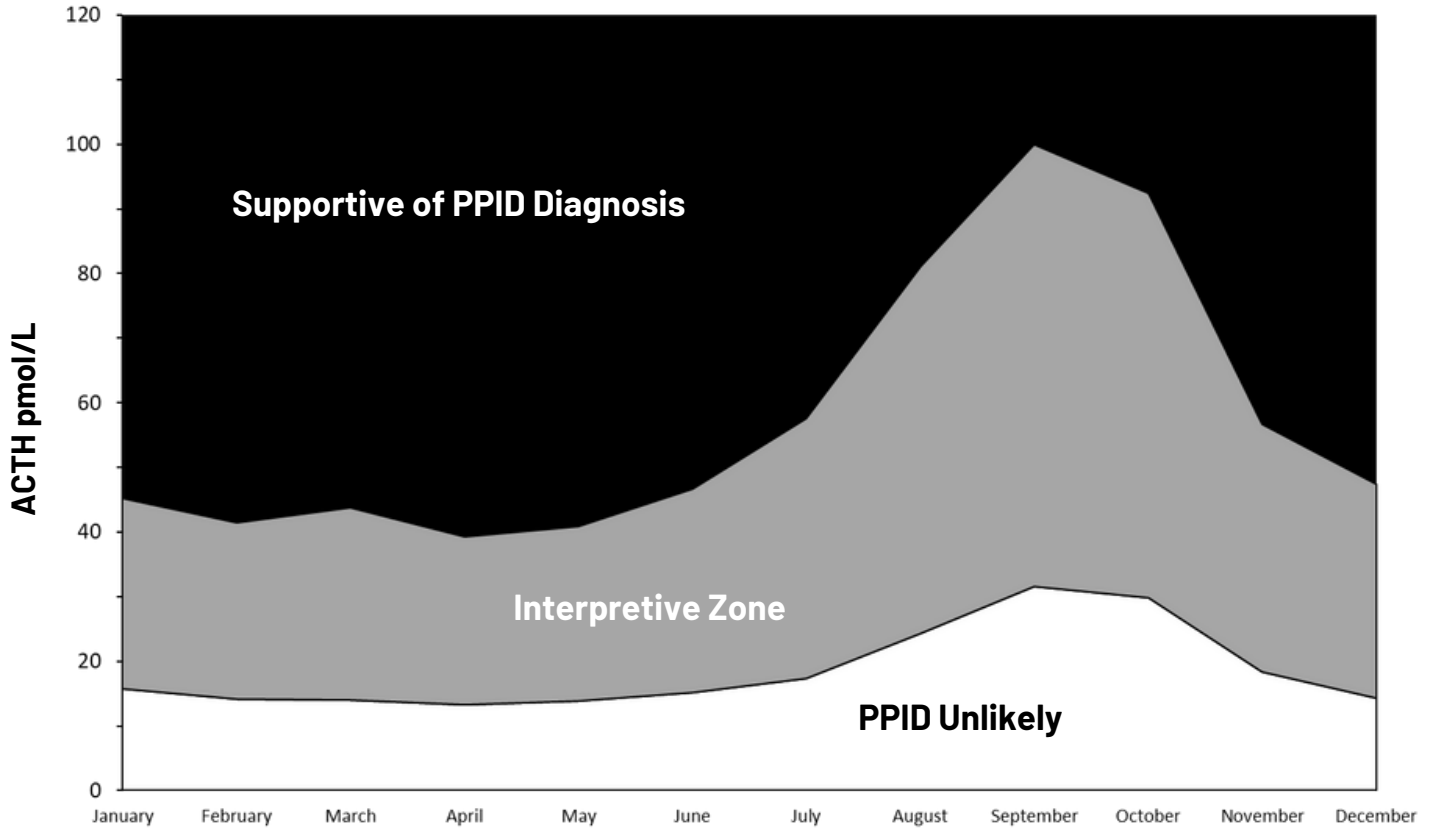
Andy Durham is affiliated with the Liphook Equine Hospital and this institution offers endocrine testing.

Boehringer Ingelheim facilitates the development of EEG guidelines by supporting travel expenses for participants but does not influence the recommendations made by the group.

### Acknowledgements

The authors thank Rachel Lemcke of Amwell Data Services LLC for helping design this document.

**Figure 7 – Seasonal interpretation of baseline ACTH concentrations in SI units**



**Table 5 – Seasonal interpretation of baseline ACTH concentrations in SI units (also refer to Figure 7 above)**

	Time of Year	PPID UNLIKELY	Interpretive Zone - Consider clinical signs and signalment	PPID LIKELY
<b>Baseline ACTH or TRH time 0 (pmol/L)</b>	Dec. - Jun.	< 3.3	3.3 - 8.8	> 8.8
	July & November	< 3.3	3.3 - 11	> 11
	August	< 4.4	4.4 - 16.5	> 16.5
	Sept. - Oct.	< 6.6	6.6 - 19.8	> 19.8
<b>ACTH 10 min. after TRH (pmol/L)*</b>	Jan. - June	< 22	22 - 44	> 44
	July - Dec.	< 22	TRH stimulation testing is most useful to identify negative cases in these months. **See below for more information.	
<b>ACTH 30 min. after TRH (pmol/L)*</b>	Jan. - June	< 8.8	8.8 - 19.8	> 19.8
	July - Dec.	< 8.8	TRH stimulation testing is most useful to identify negative cases in these months. **See below for more information.	

\*ACTH concentrations provided here are based on values determined by the Immulite 2000xpi analyzer. Specific months provided here are accurate for the northern hemisphere, but require seasonal correction for southern hemisphere interpretation.

\*\* Many healthy animals have variably exaggerated ACTH responses to TRH in the autumn. 10-minute ACTH concentrations over approximately 110 pmol/L in the autumn may be consistent with PPID in many cases, but much variability within and among horses makes it difficult to define discriminatory cut-off values for PPID diagnosis during this season.

**Table 6 – Suggested further reading**

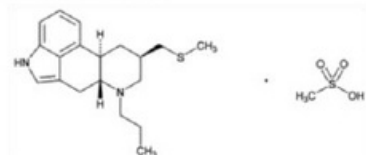
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Dopamine receptor agonist for oral use in horses only

**Caution:** Federal law restricts this drug to use by or on the order of a licensed veterinarian.

**Description:** PRASCEND Tablets are rectangular light red colored, half-scored tablets containing 1 mg pergolide, as pergolide mesylate. Pergolide mesylate is a synthetic ergot derivative and is a potent dopamine receptor agonist. The chemical name of pergolide mesylate is 8β-((Methylthio)methyl)-6-propylergoline monomethanesulfonate. The chemical structure is:



**Indication:** For the control of clinical signs associated with Pituitary Pars Intermedia Dysfunction (Equine Cushing's Disease) in horses.

**Dosage and Administration:** Administer orally at a starting dose of 2 mcg/kg once daily. Dosage may be adjusted to effect, not to exceed 4 mcg/kg daily.

It has been reported that pergolide tablets may cause eye irritation, an irritating smell, or headache when PRASCEND Tablets are split or crushed. PRASCEND Tablets should not be crushed due to the potential for increased human exposure and care should be taken to minimize exposure when splitting tablets.

The tablets are scored and the calculated dosage should be provided to the nearest one-half tablet increment (see Table 1).

Body weight	Dosage	
	2 mcg/kg	4 mcg/kg
136 - 340 kg (300 - 749 lb)	0.5 tablet	1 tablet
341 - 567 kg (750 - 1,249 lb)	1 tablet	2 tablets
568 - 795 kg (1,250 - 1,749 lb)	1.5 tablets	3 tablets
796 - 1,022 kg (1,750 - 2,249 lb)	2 tablets	4 tablets

Dosing should be titrated according to individual response to therapy to achieve the lowest effective dose. Dose titration is based on improvement in clinical signs associated with Pituitary Pars Intermedia Dysfunction (PPID) and/or improvement or normalization of endocrine tests (for example, dexamethasone suppression test or endogenous ACTH test).

In some cases, adverse events were reported after a dose increase (see **Post-Approval Experience**).

If signs of dose intolerance develop, the dose should be decreased by half for 3 to 5 days and then titrated back up in 2 mcg/kg increments every 2 weeks until the desired effect is achieved.

**Contraindications:** PRASCEND is contraindicated in horses with hypersensitivity to pergolide mesylate or other ergot derivatives.

**Warnings:** Do not use in horses intended for human consumption.

Keep PRASCEND in a secure location out of reach of dogs, cats, and other animals to prevent accidental ingestion or overdose.

Dogs have eaten PRASCEND tablets that were placed in food intended for horses or dropped during administration of the tablets to the horses. Adverse reactions may occur if animals other than horses ingest PRASCEND tablets (see **Post-Approval Experience**).

**Human Warnings: Not for use in humans.** Do not ingest the product. Keep this and all medications out of the reach of children. PRASCEND should not be administered by persons who have had adverse reactions to ergotamine or other ergot derivatives.

Pergolide, like other ergot derivatives, may cause emesis, dizziness, lethargy or low blood pressure.

**Pregnant or lactating women should wear gloves when administering this product.** It has been reported that pergolide tablets may cause eye irritation, an irritating smell, or headache when PRASCEND Tablets are split or crushed. PRASCEND Tablets should not be crushed due to the potential for increased human exposure and care should be taken to minimize exposure when splitting tablets. Store this product separately away from human medicinal products and handle this product with care to avoid accidental ingestion.

In case of accidental ingestion seek medical advice immediately and show the package leaflet or the label to the physician.

**Precautions:** Treatment with PRASCEND may cause inappetence.

The use of PRASCEND in breeding, pregnant, or lactating horses has not been evaluated. The effects of pergolide mesylate on breeding, pregnant, or lactating horses are not known; however, the pharmacologic action of pergolide mesylate suggests that it may interfere with reproductive functions such as lactation.

PRASCEND is approximately 90% associated with plasma proteins. Use caution if administering PRASCEND with other drugs that affect protein binding. Dopamine antagonists, such as neuroleptics (phenothiazines, domperidone) or metoclopramide, ordinarily should not be administered concurrently with PRASCEND (a dopamine agonist) since these agents may diminish the effectiveness of Prascend.

**Adverse Reactions:**

**Pre-Approval Experience:** A total of 122 horses treated with PRASCEND Tablets for six months were included in a field study safety analysis.

Clinical sign	# Cases	Cases (%)
Decreased appetite	40	32.8
Lameness	22	18.0
Diarrhea/Loose stool	12	9.8
Colic	12	9.8
Lethargy	12	9.8
Abnormal Weight Loss	11	9.0
Laminitis*	10	8.2
Heart murmur	10	8.2
Death	8	6.6
Tooth disorder	8	6.6
Skin abscess	7	5.7
Musculoskeletal pain	6	4.9
Behavior change	6	4.9

\*Three new cases and 7 pre-existing, recurring cases

Inappetence or decreased appetite occurred at one or more meals in 40 of 122 horses treated with Prascend. At the baseline evaluation 1.6% of owners reported a history of inappetence or decreased appetite as compared to the 32.8% of horses that experienced inappetence or decreased appetite during the study. Most cases of inappetence were transient and occurred during the first month of treatment; however, some horses experienced sporadic inappetence throughout the study. Two horses required a temporary reduction in dose due to inappetence during the first month of the study. Both horses returned to their original dose within 30 days.

Weight loss occurred in more than half of the horses in this study; however, weight loss that was considered abnormal was only reported in 11 horses.

Lethargy was reported in 9.8% of horses during the study, and was not reported in any horses at the baseline evaluation.

Behavioral changes were noted in 6 horses including aggression, kicking, agitation, nervous behavior and increased activity. One horse required a temporary reduction in dose due to energetic behavior during the first month of the study.

Eight horses died or were euthanized during the study due to worsening of pre-existing conditions (laminitis, dental disease, septic tenosynovitis) or colic (strangulating lipomas, large colon volvulus).

One mare was inadvertently enrolled in the study while pregnant and experienced dystocia resulting in the death of the foal.

### Post-Approval Experience (2019):

The following adverse events are based on post approval adverse drug experience reporting for PRASCEND. Not all adverse events are reported. It is not always possible to reliably estimate the adverse event frequency or establish a causal relationship to product exposure using these data.

The following adverse events in horses are categorized in order of decreasing reporting frequency by body system and in decreasing order of reporting frequency within each body system:

**General:** anorexia, lethargy, weight loss  
**Gastrointestinal:** diarrhea, abdominal pain/colic  
**Dermatological:** alopecia, hyperhidrosis, dermatitis  
**Musculoskeletal:** laminitis, muscle stiffness/soreness  
**Neurological:** ataxia, seizure, muscle tremors  
**Behavioral:** aggression (to other horses and humans), hyperactivity (anxiety, agitation), other behavioral changes (stud-like behavior, spooky, unpredictable, confused)  
**Clinical pathology:** anemia, elevated liver enzymes, thrombocytopenia

The above adverse events were reported in some horses at starting dose levels, while in the others following a dose increase.

Death (including euthanasia) has been reported.

Adverse events have been reported in dogs following ingestion of tablets prepared for administration to horses.

To report suspected adverse reactions, to obtain a Safety Data Sheet (SDS), or for technical assistance, contact Boehringer Ingelheim Animal Health USA Inc. at 1-888-637-4251. For additional information about adverse drug experience reporting for animal drugs, contact the FDA at 1-888-FDA-VETS or online at <http://www.fda.gov/reportanimalae>.

**Clinical Pharmacology:** Pergolide mesylate is a synthetic ergot derivative and is a potent dopamine receptor agonist. As with other dopamine agonists, pergolide inhibits the release of prolactin which suggests that it may interfere with lactation. In horses with PPID, pergolide is believed to exert its therapeutic effect by stimulating dopamine receptors, and has been shown to decrease the plasma levels of adrenocorticotrophic hormone (ACTH), melanocyte stimulating hormone (MSH), and other pro-opiomelanocortin peptides.<sup>1</sup>

Pharmacokinetic information in the horse is based on a study using single oral doses of 10 mcg/kg in six healthy mares between 3 and 17 years of age.<sup>2</sup> Pergolide was rapidly absorbed; the mean maximum concentration (C<sub>max</sub>) was 4.05±2.02 ng/mL with the median time to maximum concentration (T<sub>max</sub>) being 0.415 hours.

The area under the curve (AUC) was 14.08±7.46 hr·ng/mL. The mean half life (T<sub>1/2</sub>) was 5.86±3.42 hours; the mean apparent oral clearance (CL/F) was 1204 mL/kg/hr; and the mean apparent volume of distribution (V/F) was 3082±1354 mL/kg.

**Effectiveness:** An open-label, historical control, field study evaluated the effectiveness of PRASCEND for the control of clinical signs of PPID. A total of 122 horses with PPID were enrolled in the study, 113 of which were included in effectiveness evaluations. The success of each horse was based on results of endocrinology testing (dexamethasone suppression test or endogenous ACTH test) and/or improvement in clinical signs related to PPID (hirsutism, hyperhidrosis, polyuria/polydipsia, abnormal fat distribution, and/or muscle-wasting) on the Day 180 evaluation. Based on endocrine testing and investigators' clinical assessment scores, 86 (76.1%) of the 113 evaluable cases were treatment successes.

Percent success	Lower bound: one-sided 95% confidence interval
76.1% (86/113)	68.6%

Enrolled horses were diagnosed with PPID based on the presence of hirsutism and an abnormal pre-study endocrine test result. All horses were treated with 2 mcg/kg PRASCEND (to the nearest one-half tablet) orally once daily for the first three months. If the endocrine test result on Day 90 was normal or adequately improved, the horse continued on the same dose through Day 180. If the endocrine test result on Day 90 was abnormal, the dose increased to 4 mcg/kg given once daily through Day 180.

Forty-seven (41.6%) of the 113 horses included in the effectiveness database required a dose increase at Day 90. Improvement was noted in scores for all clinical sign categories and in mean results for endocrine tests.

Table 4 Percent of Animals with Improvement in Clinical Signs Relative to Baseline Scores

Clinical sign	Day 90±7 (%)	Day 180±7 (%)
Hirsutism	32.7%	89.2%
Hyperhidrosis	27.4%	42.3%
Polyuria / polydipsia	31.0%	34.2%
Abnormal fat distribution	21.2%	33.3%
Muscle wasting	36.3%	46.0%

Table 5 Endocrine test results (mean values)

Test	# Animals	Baseline	Day 90	Day 180
ACTH (pg/mL)	20	73.53	51.12	45.08
DST** (mcg/dL)	93	3.12	1.39	1.47

\*\* Dexamethasone suppression test: Post dexamethasone cortisol concentration

**Animal Safety:** In a six month target animal safety study healthy adult horses received PRASCEND administered orally, once daily, at doses of either 0 mcg/kg, 4 mcg/kg, 6 mcg/kg, or 8 mcg/kg (0X, 1X, 1.5X, or 2X the maximum recommended dose). There were eight healthy horses (four males and four females) in each treatment group. Doses were prepared by dissolving tablets in approximately 10 mL of a 50% sugar water solution.

PRASCEND treated groups had lower mean heart rates and higher mean temperatures than the control group. Horses in all treatment groups had minimum heart rates within the normal range and maximum temperatures below 101.5°F. One 1.5X horse experienced a mild episode of spasmodic colic on Day 3 that resolved after treatment with flunixin meglumine.

Mean red blood cell counts and hemoglobin values were lower in PRASCEND treated groups as compared to the control group. Other hematology parameters including hematocrit, white blood cells, absolute neutrophils, and absolute lymphocytes exhibited mild, transient decreases as compared to the control group. The hematology parameters generally decreased over the first 30 to 60 days after treatment initiation and then returned to values similar to pre-treatment levels. No treatment related alterations were identified on histopathology evaluation of bone marrow.

**Storage:** Store at or below 25°C (77°F).

**How Supplied:** PRASCEND Tablets are available in 1 mg strength - packaged 10 tablets per blister and 60 or 160 tablets per carton.  
NDC 0010-4489-01 - 60 tablets  
NDC 0010-4489-02 - 160 tablets

Approved by FDA under NADA # 141-331

### References:

- <sup>1</sup> Orth, D.N., Holscher, M.A., Wilson, M.G., et al. (1982) Equine Cushing's Disease: Plasma Immunoreactive Proopiomelanocortin Peptide and Cortisol Levels Basally and in Response to Diagnostic Tests. *Endocrinology*. 110(4):1430-41
- <sup>2</sup> Wright A, Gehring R, Coetzee H (2008.) Pharmacokinetics of pergolide in normal mares. *American College of Veterinary Internal Medicine Forum*, Abstract #36, San Antonio, TX.

### Marketed by:

Boehringer Ingelheim Animal Health USA Inc.  
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