

Forelimb Manipulation

Lower Limb Flexion Test

During the lower limb flexion test the fetlock, proximal interphalangeal, and distal interphalangeal joints are flexed; the palmar pastern and fetlock region soft tissue structures are compressed; and the dorsal structures are stretched.



Fetlock Flexion Test

A true fetlock flexion test can be performed by carefully flexing only the fetlock joint. The clinician's hand grasps only the pastern and not the toe of the hoof while avoiding forced flexion of the proximal and distal interphalangeal joints.



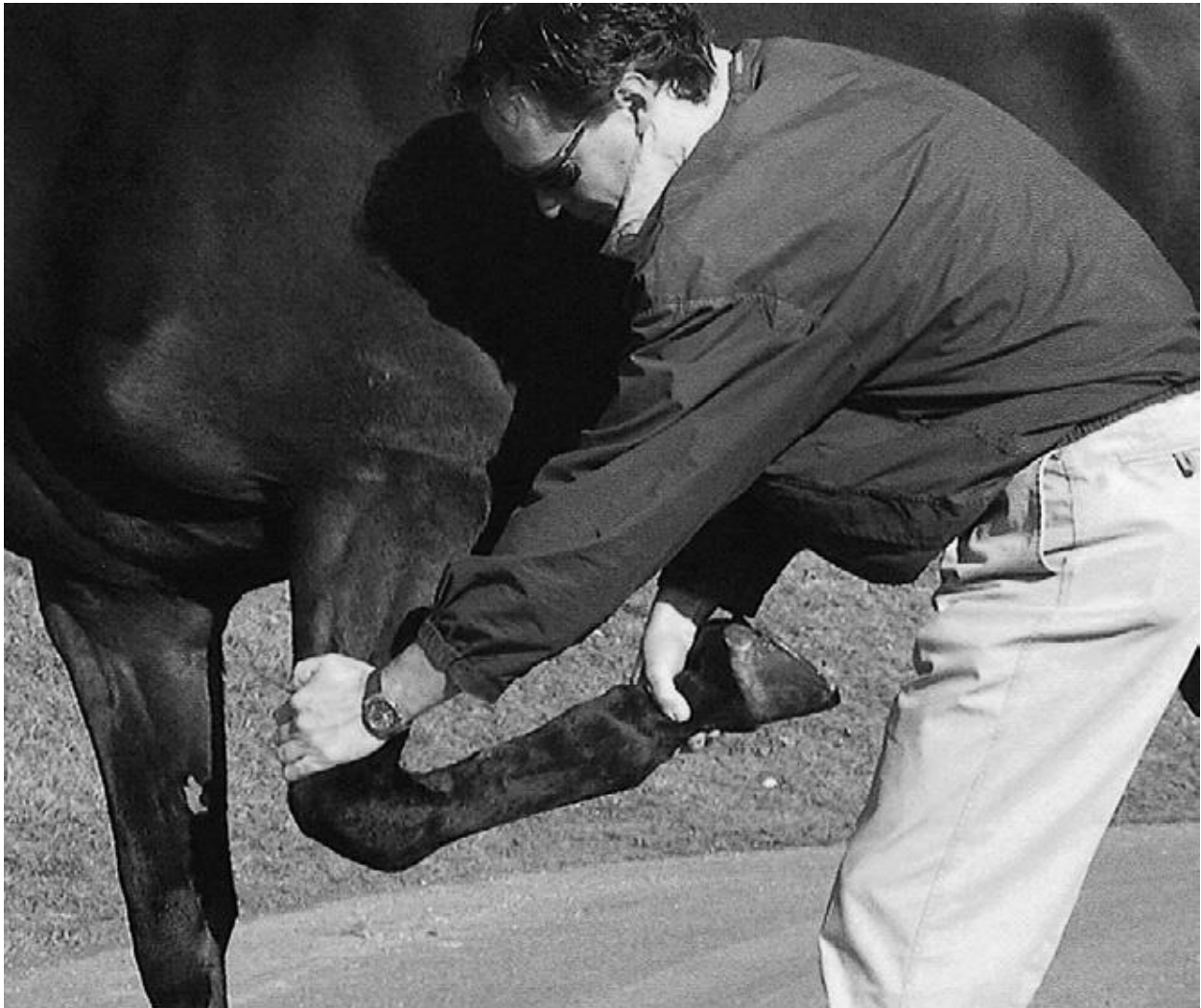
Carpal Flexion Test

The carpal flexion test is the most specific of all flexion tests, but it applies concomitant mild flexion of the elbow and shoulder joints. Although false-negative results are possible, a positive carpal flexion test result usually means that lameness originates from the carpal region.



Upper Forelimb Flexion

Upper forelimb flexion is performed by grasping the antebrachium and pulling the entire limb caudally and slightly proximally. This maneuver flexes the shoulder joint and extends the elbow joint. Horses with shoulder region lameness often respond positively to this manipulative Test.



Upper Forelimb Extension Test

The upper limb extension test is performed by pulling the forelimb out in front of the horse and forcing it proximally. This places the elbow joint in flexion and the shoulder joint in extension. In my experience, lameness of the elbow region is exacerbated by this technique, but occasionally shoulder joint lameness also is worsened.