**Annular Ligament Desmotomy**

Description

Annular ligaments are strong bands f fibres that encircle a joint in a horse, these bands can become constricted and thickened resulting in pain, swelling and lameness, this is called annular ligament syndrome (ALS). ALS can be caused by trauma or strain. An Annular Ligament Desmotomy aims to transect the affected annular ligament in an attempt to reduce constriction, thus allowing the ligament to heal properly.

Procedure

* Antibiotics, to control secondary infection and anti-inflammatory medicine, to control swelling should be given before the surgery.
* The procedure is performed with the horse standing, under sedation and a local anaesthetic. An ultrasound machine is used to determine which structures may be implicated along with the ligament.
* An incision should be made in the skin and the tissues manipulated to locate he annular ligament.
* An incision is then made in the thickened ligament to allow it to release.
* Tissues should then be sutured.

Prognosis and Post Operative Care

* The leg should be bandaged and this bandage should be changed daily.
* The horse can be given painkillers to help with any pain after the surgery
* Some horses recover dramatically in 5 days.
* Walking and other light exercises are recommended after surgery to help recovery.
* The procedure has a good prognosis nd horses return to work providing there the condition is not complicated by other factors