

FoalinMare

Insights inside the foaling mare

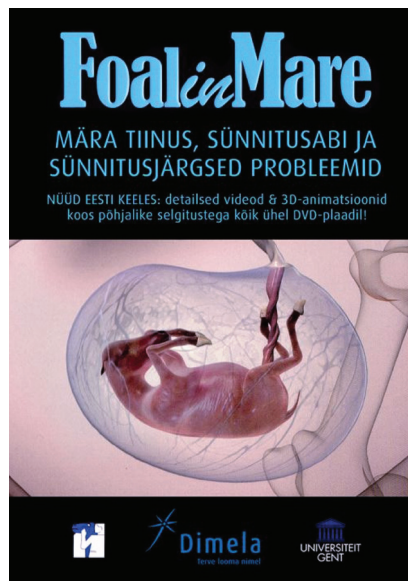
Second edition

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In comparison with other domestic animals, parturition in the horse is a fast and almost an explosive event. Although parturition in the mare frequently occurs without human intervention or complications, abnormal events may lead to life threatening sequelae to the foal and mare. It is critical, therefore, for veterinarians and horse breeders to understand the normal progression of events during parturition and the periparturient period, as well as to identify whether intervention is needed when abnormal situations are suspected.

The Department of Reproduction, Obstetrics and Herd Health, Faculty of Veterinary Medicine, Gent University, Belgium has developed, together with collaborators from Europe and USA, a teaching DVD with 'insights inside' the foaling mare. The resulting *FoalinMare* DVD consists of two high-definition film sequences and several three-dimensional movie animations illustrating the normal intra-uterine development of the foal in late gestation, the physiologic progression of the three stages of parturition, as well as associated abnormalities and possible interventions/corrections. Overall, the *FoalinMare* DVD provides excellent



learning elements for students and veterinarians, as well as for grooms and horse owners of pregnant mares.

The *FoalinMare* DVD is well organized as the information is outlined in a logical fashion via a series of headings and drop-down menus. It is simple to navigate between its different subdivisions using the main menu (Foetal development; Stage I, II, and III of parturition; Dystocia; and Miscellaneous conditions). Under the section of Fetal Development, which is relatively short, an overview of the fetal growth from day 150 of gestation to term is provided; however, this is obviously not the

focus of the DVD. The focus of the DVD is parturition, dystocia, and other related complications. The pre-foaling fetal presentation, posture and position are well demonstrated, as well as their dynamics as parturition pursues. Stage I (prodromi), stage II (fetus expulsion), and stage III (expulsion of the fetal membranes) of parturition are animated in three excellent three-dimensional movies (one for each stage) and a high-definition film (all stages). In this film, attention is also given to the normal bonding between the foal and the dam, and the importance of proper management of umbilicus (deeping), colostrum uptake, and meconium passage in the new born foal, is emphasized. The drawback in this film, in my opinion, is that it shows veterinarian intervention during stage II of parturition, and later, bottle-feeding of the presented new born foal, which both appear to be unnecessary interferences in the natural normal events; this unintentionally may give the impression that such interventions are always required.

The *FoalinMare* DVD provides series of three-dimensional animated movies illustrating various conditions of dystocia, due to several abnormal

foal presentations, positions, and limbs and head postures. Furthermore, the options for corrections/manipulations of such conditions via assisted vaginal delivery, fetotomy, or C-section (a high-definition film) are discussed and animated. Moreover, the DVD provides educational aids regarding other pregnancy/foaling complications such as uterine torsion, urinary vesicle prolapse/eversion, rectal prolapse, and premature chorioallantois separation (Red bag delivery). Still, the DVD could have been improved if information regarding the basic approaches to assisted vaginal delivery (usually in standing mare) and controlled vaginal delivery (elevation of the hind limbs under general anesthesia) had been incorporated

in it. Key elements of such procedures such as restraint, epidural anesthesia, general anesthesia, lubrication, as well as explanations regarding the relevant aiding tools (e.g. chains, eye hook) are not described.

FoalinMare is a valuable educational DVD. The movies and animations in this DVD are of high quality and the information is provided in a simple, elegant, artful and educational manner. The entire production comes along with voice-overs in English, Spanish, French, Italian and German, and the subtitling and texts are available in English, Dutch, Portuguese, Estonian, Japanese, Chinese and Russian, which make this DVD valuable to many professionals around the globe.

Overall, I highly recommend this DVD; it is an excellent illustrative visual teaching and learning tool, which was not available before, for students, practitioners, researchers, and horse owners wanting to become more familiar with equine parturition. For any further details and purchase, please log on to <http://www.foalinmare.com>.

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