



## SHEATH CLEANING PROTOCOL

Supplies:

Sedation – see your veterinarian

Cotton/bucket

Warm water

Gloves

Sheath cleaner (Abby Sheath/teat cleaner or Ivory soap)

### PROCEDURE:

Sedation is required in most horses; so you will have to work with or under the supervision of your veterinarian.

The goal of sheath cleaning is not only to clean the sheath and penis of excess smegma, dirt or urine, but also do an exam of the actual area itself. We look for any changes in coloration, texture, any lumps, growths or lesions that may have grown since the last cleaning, and removal of the bean. Not all horses accumulate a bean, but the majority do. The bean is a pale, kidney shaped accumulation of smegma in a small opening just inside the urethra. If the bean becomes large enough it can apply pressure to the urethra making urination painful.

One of the most important things to remember when doing a sheath clean is to be gentle but firm. Excessive scrubbing or rubbing can damage the sensitive tissue.

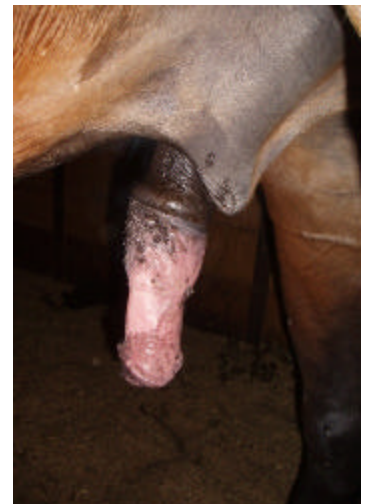
The cleaning consists of 4 steps; pre-soak the sheath and penis, wash the area, remove any beans and then rinse extremely well.

Step 1; Wet down the entire penis and sheath with your warm water and cotton.

Step 2; Using your cotton and cleaner, clean out the sheath and shaft. Your horse may try to retract his penis into the sheath, hold firm. Clean in between the folds and look for any beans.

Step 3; remove any beans – see page 2.

Step 4; Using wet cotton, rinse the entire area well.



Bean removal:

After wetting down and cleaning the entire sheath/penis area, check the end of the penis just inside the urethra.

Applying gentle pressure, pull back the head of the penis and look to see if there is a bean next to the urethra (yellow colored lump next to the urethra in this picture).

If a bean is present, slowly and gently "milk" it out of the opening. Sometimes more than one bean is present, so double check after removing the initial bean.





A horse that presented with not only open lesions, but also a change in the actual skin-consistency (looks like cardboard) on his penis. He is being treated with a chemotherapy-like topical cream.



Lesions can also be found on the outer sheath.



This horse presented with a swollen sheath. No tumors or lesions were found, but an extremely large bean was found and impeding his urination. Whether or not the swelling was due to this is unknown, but the sheath did return to normal size 1-2 weeks after the sheath cleaning.