Survival and Fertility Rates After Cesarean Section

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Dystocia duration and mare age had a negative effect on foaling rate in the 3 yr after cesarean section. The cumulative foaling rate before cesarean section was 79%, whereas foaling rate after cesarean section was 40.5%, 61.3%, and 58.5% for years 1, 2, and 3, respectively. If the time from rupture of the chorioallantois to foal delivery was >90 min, mean foaling rate after cesarean section was 51% compared with 73% in mares whose foals were delivered in <90 min. Foaling rate in mares >16 yr of age averaged 30% after cesarean section. Foal survival after cesarean section was 26% in dystocia mares, 83% (5/6) in elective c-section mares, and 50% (10/20) in mares with a medical or surgical disease. Authors’ addresses: Rood and Riddle Equine Hospital, PO Box 12070, Lexington, Kentucky 40580 (Abernathy, LeBlanc, Embertson, Pierce); and Department of Statistics, University of Kentucky, Lexington, Kentucky (Stromberg); e-mail: kentuckylake@bellsouth.net (Abernathy). © 2009 AAEP.

1. Introduction
Cesarean section is performed in ~15–25% of mares admitted to an equine hospital for dystocia. It may also be performed in mares with medical or surgical problems or as an elective procedure. Data on foaling rates after cesarean section is limited.

2. Materials and Methods
Ninety-seven mares that underwent cesarean section at Rood and Riddle Equine Hospital between 1986 and 2000 were included. Data collected included mare age, time from rupture of chorioallantois to delivery, post-partum complications, survival of mare and foal to discharge, and cumulative foaling rate before cesarean section and for the 3 yr after cesarean section.

3. Results and Discussion
Length of dystocia and mare age affected subsequent foaling rates. Retained placenta was the most common post-partum complication (45/97 mares; 46%). Acceptable foaling rates can be achieved in mares after cesarean section if labor is not prolonged and the mare is <16 yr of age.