

## **Annular Ligament Desmotomy Procedure in Horses**

- Antibiotics and anti-inflammatory medications should be administered as instructed prior to surgery.
- This procedure is often performed at the horse's home site and while in the standing position under sedation and local anesthetic if possible. However If the horse will not tolerate this then general anaesthetic is used.
- The horse is placed in the dorsal or lateral recumbency.
- Imaging such as ultrasound will be important in determining exactly what structures are affected as tendons, tendon sheaths, and other structures may be implicated as well as the ligament.
- The area where the ligament is to be accessed is shaved and cleaned antiseptically.
- An incision, usually 2 cm in length is be made and tissues manipulated to isolate the annular ligament. An incision will be made in the thickened ligament to allow it to release. If adhesions are present, a larger incision may be made to allow better access to associated tissues and an endoscope used if required.
- Tissues will be repaired with sutures and the horse allowed to recover from anaesthetic and sedation.
- The horse's leg is bandaged and dressings need to be changed regularly. A sterile dressing will be placed against the incision for the first several days. Mild exercise including walking should be performed for several days post-surgery depending on the horse's condition. If adhesions were present, postoperative exercise will be especially important to prevent adhesion recurrence. A scar will be present after recovery.



Swelling Visible  
Along the Proximal  
Margin of the  
Annular Ligament

**Location  
of  
Annular  
Ligament**



**Annular  
Ligament**