

Standing computed tomography arrives in Southern California at San Luis Rey Equine Hospital.

San Luis Rey Equine Hospital adds computed tomography (CT, or “cat scan”) to their advanced diagnostic imaging capabilities. The hospital in San Diego County’s Bonsall is currently one of two clinics in North America successfully performing standing CT scans of the equine skull. This includes visualization of the brain, sinuses, nasal cavities and teeth, all without the superimposition, which greatly hampers standard radiography. With the installation design at SLREH, imaging of the skull is possible without the need for general anesthesia.



CT technology uses very small x-ray beams from many different angles around the body (called a slice) that are transmitted to a computer program, which produces an image of the highest quality.

Images can be manipulated to render 3-dimensional reconstructions from 2-dimensional slices, producing exceptional images, and opening up whole new areas of diagnosis and treatment.

The CT unit in use at San Luis Rey Equine Hospital is able to accommodate very large body parts relative to the majority of CT units available for medical or veterinary use, measuring 85 cm in diameter relative to the much more common 60 cm diameter gantry. SLREH is the first veterinary hospital in the world to make use of this revolutionary, portable CT unit.

The BodyTom from Samsung is currently used at a number of human hospitals in a variety of different applications including in the operating room, diagnostic units and emergency departments.

Given the portability and size of this CT system, San Luis Rey Equine Hospital is in the unique position to be able to image very large anatomical regions such as the entire equine neck, which has been almost exclusively limited to radiography due to patient size, until now. Few hospitals in the world currently have the ability to perform equine myelography with computed

tomography, and SLREH is proud to join this elite group as the only hospital in North America with this capability.

In addition, orthopedic imaging is readily performed using computed tomography. Its advanced technology allows diagnosis of both orthopedic and soft tissue injuries, and is highly sensitive for conditions such as navicular lesions. Exquisite bone detail is appreciated with CT relative to magnetic resonance imaging (MRI), with visualization of fine anatomic bone detail that is superior to MRI.

While soft tissue contrast with MRI is the gold standard, soft tissue structures remain well visualized with CT, and the addition of intra-arterial contrast allows for visualization of highly detailed imaging of the vascularization of abnormal soft tissues. Other unique applications that can potentially be employed by this system include whole abdomen and thorax scanning of foals. CT imparts an unprecedented amount of information in complex conditions which is unequaled by other modalities.

Since 1971, San Luis Rey Equine Hospital has served the equine community 24/7/365 providing state-of-the-art care for routine surgical, sports medicine, lameness, rehabilitation, internal medicine, advanced imaging, emergency and ophthalmology cases.

Article provided by San Luis Rey Equine Hospital. For more information visit www.slreh.com or call 760-726-4566.