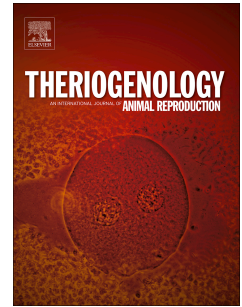


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Ultrastructural and histological characteristics of the endometrium during early embryo development in mares

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2 ULTRASTRUCTURAL AND HISTOLOGICAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE
3 ENDOMETRIUM DURING EARLY EMBRYO DEVELOPMENT IN MARES
4

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15
16 **Abstract**

17 The aim of this study was to evaluate ultrastructural and histological changes in
18 the endometrium on days 7, 10 and 13 post-ovulation in pregnant and cyclic
19 mares. Mares were routinely examined by transrectal palpation and
20 ultrasonographic examination of the reproductive tract until estrus was detected.
21 In the first cycle, endometrial biopsies from 30 cyclic mares (Cyclic group) were
22 collected on days 7, 10 and 13 post-ovulation. In the second cycle, the same
23 mares were bred by a fertile stallion. At days 7, 10 and 13 post-ovulation
24 intrauterine biopsies were collected. Immediately after sample collection, the
25 mare's uteri were flushed, and those mares with embryo recovery were
26 assigned to the Pregnant group. From ovulation detection until day of uterine
27 biopsy, blood samples to measure Progesterone concentrations were collected
28 daily in cyclic and pregnant mares. A larger blood vessel caliber was observed
29 in pregnant mares than in cyclic from day 7 to 13. On the 7th day of pregnancy a
30 large loss of ciliated cells was evident in the group of pregnant mares in
31 comparison with the Cyclic group and the superficial cells of the endometrium
32 were more protruded, and a small amount of histotrophic material between the
33 folds was observed. On the 10th day of pregnancy, the glandular histotrophic
34 secretion and the secretion of luminal epithelium became more intense than the

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