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*A Tradition of Leadership and Excellence in Equine Medicine*

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## **Digital Radiography**

**Tim M. Lynch, D.V.M., Dipl, A.C.V.S.**

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Peterson and Smith is proud to announce the acquisition of an Eclin digital radiographic system. Digital radiographs offer superior detail and can often times highlight subtle changes in trabecular bone not seen on regular radiographic film. Digital radiographs are taken with the usual radiographic machine or x-ray generator and a medical grade digital pad. The pad acts like the film in normal radiographic cassettes but has a much larger latitude of what radiographic energy it can capture. This gives digital radiographs a definite advantage over conventional film because it can see all the shades of gray whereas film is either black or white.

The unit is completely portable and can be taken to the farm. Another advantage of digital radiographs is that one can review the images almost instantaneously on the computer without having to develop any film. This almost eliminates the need for re-takes and costly film and film processing. The image can then be manipulated with the computer and is now digital, which means it, can be stored on a CD or sent via e-mail. Digital radiographs have been used in human medicine for quite some time now and will more than likely be how radiographs will be taken in the future.

Digital radiographs will not help if the proper views are not taken or if the position of such views is poor. However, overexposure and underexposure of the film is almost completely eliminated with the digital radiographic system. Interpretation of digital radiographs is best performed by those veterinarians experienced in reading digital radiographs. The amount of information offered by this system can be overwhelming therefore veterinarians will need to learn to weed out the useful information from the noise of the system.

Digital radiographs can be taken at the farm or clinic. Radiographs or films will be available as well as the CD version, which, can be viewed by any windows based computer. If you have any questions or are interested in digital radiographs for your horse please call Dr. Tim Lynch at Peterson and Smith.