

# Occipitoatlantoaxial Malformation (OAAM)



## What is occipitoatlantoaxial malformation (OAAM)?

- Neurologic disorder caused by a developmental defect involving the first two vertebrae of the neck and the base of the skull
- The skeletal malformations result in compression and damage to the spinal cord.
- Typically found in Arabians, but also reported in other breeds.
- A mutation (OAAM1) has been identified in Arabians, but multiple mutations appear to be involved.

## What you can do to keep your horse healthy:

- The available genetic test (OAAM1) is recommended for horses in Arabian lineages that have produced OAAM affected foals. Information from the test helps breeders and owners identify carrier horses and select mating pairs to avoid producing affected foals.
- A negative genetic test for OAAM1 does not exclude OAAM, as there are likely also other mutations involved.

### Signs

Progressive incoordination  
Weakness of limbs  
Inability to stand  
Abnormal head & neck movement  
Paralysis

### Transmission

Autosomal recessive mode of inheritance in Arabians

### Treatment

None

*\*If your horse needs medical care, contact the Large Animal Clinic at (530) 752-1393.*



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