"A Must-read for Anyone Who Cares for Horses"

Hoof Prints on the Journey

Every Horse Owner's Simple Guide to the Hoof

CAROLE HERDER

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BY
CAROLE HERDER

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this publication to The Cavallo Community. The horse owners who are courageous and unwavering in their commitment to continued knowledge, information, and understanding, are at the forefront of this monumental shift from traditional practices. Moving towards what is more natural, holistic, and health-oriented can be a lonely and still extraordinary experience. Together, we can help to support each other's choices.

With heartfelt appreciation, I salute you and offer the best care I can.

Table of Contents

CHAPTER 1 Let's Look Inside 1

CHAPTER 2 Nature's Perfect Design 7

CHAPTER 3 Imagining Wild Horses 13

CHAPTER 4 Is She Abusing Her Horse? 21

CHAPTER 5 Considering Your Options 27

CHAPTER 6 Six Functional Hoof Tips 33

CHAPTER 7 Choosing Your Hoof Care Partner 39

CHAPTER 8 Understanding the Miracle 49

CHAPTER 9 Feeding the Feet 55

CHAPTER 10 Seedy Toe, Thrush and Hoof Cracks 63

CHAPTER 11 Four Ways to Assist Your Horse Through Season Change 69

CHAPTER 12 Soundness for Navicular 77

CHAPTER 13 Something to Chew On 85

CHAPTER 14 Laminitis School for the Faint of Heart 91

CHAPTER 15 Laminitis – A Healing Miracle 99

CHAPTER 16 Why My Horse? 107

CHAPTER 17 Check Another 'Hot Spot' When Your Horse Seems Sore 115

CHAPTER 18 Climate Change Challenges 123

Afterword Who Are You? What Do You Want for Your Horse? ... 131

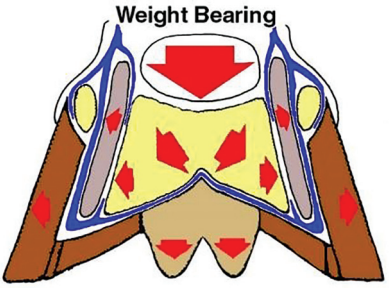
About the Author 137

CHAPTER 1

LET'S LOOK INSIDE

If you have ever been confused about the structures and bones that are inside the horse's hoof, you are not alone. For the average horse owner, a passionate study of this part of the horse's anatomy can be discouraging. One reason is simple. It's challenging to identify a framework when the names of their parts change.

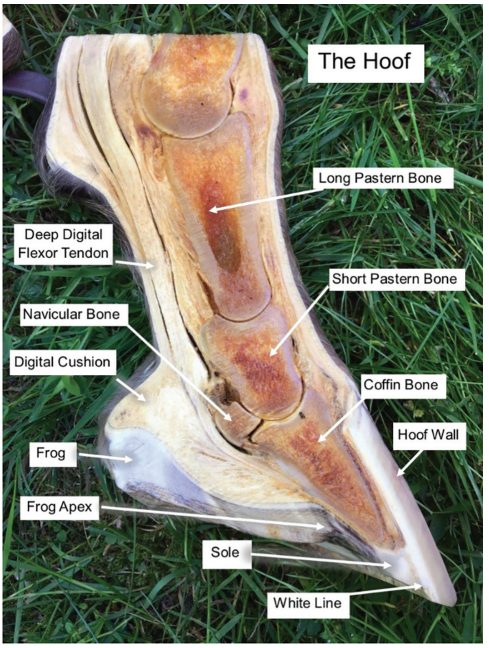
Let's start with the Pedal Bone. Also called the Coffin Bone. Also called the Distal Phalanx, the Os Pedis, the P3 and the Third Phalanx. Conversations around this part of the internal hoof structure require adaptability. One must be able to change the label, like switching from one language to another. We horse-people must be adaptable.



The Distal Phalanx is furthest out from the body. I remember the word 'distal' by thinking of the word 'distance.' And 'phalanx' is short for phalanges, which are the bones in the hands and feet of most primates. The P3 is one of four bones in the toe (if you will) of the horse. It serves as part of the team which enables shock absorption in the entire hoof during weight bearing and while in motion. It is meant to drop down, like a trampoline to accommodate the weight. For this to happen, the heels spread apart to provide space for the Coffin Bone and Sole of the hoof to descend. Closest to the bottom of the foot, the function of this bone is affected by treatment of the horse's foot; traditionally whether and how to apply shoes.

Placed on top of P3, the second bone, is also called the Middle Phalanx, the P2 the Os Phalanx, the Short Pastern Bone, and the Second Phalanx. The P1 is above the P2. Makes sense, right? but wait. This one is also called the Long Pastern Bone (because it is the

longest), and it is also called the Os Compendale, Os Saffragenous and the First Phalanx.



Attached by super-strength ligaments at the back of P2 and P3 is the all-important albeit small, Navicular Bone or Distal Sesamoid, called the Shuttle Bone. Made of elastic-like fibers and cartilage at the back of the hoof, is the Digital Cushion. Its function is to further assist with shock absorption and pump blood to deliver oxygen and nutrients. As an extension of muscle tissue, the Deep Digital Flexor Tendon runs along behind the Navicular Bone and helps flex and extend the digit. Attached to the Hoof Wall and the Coffin Bone is an ample supply of blood vessels that help nourish the hoof, called the Corium or Pododerm.

One of our biggest challenges is confusion when our horses become lame. Comprehending the words spoken and their relative function to each other will support your clarity in conversation with your veterinarian. Understanding is our responsibility. With the necessary information, we can better accept and understand a diagnosis. For the most part, there is no need to be further versed in the intricacy of the inner hoof. With your greater understanding, you can be involved in the prognosis. There are options. If we intend to keep our horses sound, it is our responsibility to understand them. We are currently experiencing the most significant evolution in the treatment of horse feet in our lifetimes. We are at THE FOREFRONT of this evolutionary transformation. Here's to our horses' health!

“Nevel, my cute, loveable 15 hand, ornery Haflinger. Cavallos have made all the difference for his tender feet. He immediately picks up a foot when he hears me ripping the Velcro to open up the boot to put it on!”

Kim DeForrest

CHAPTER 2

NATURE'S PERFECT DESIGN

What we look at and see is what we comment on. We also judge, compare, and argue about our interpretation of it. How we describe and define our rulings about the health, shape, conformation, angles, widths, and lengths of the hoof is most often dogmatic opinion. I have yet to discover the convincingly ideal hoof shape overall. It is by no means a matter of one-fits-all. Every horse is different.

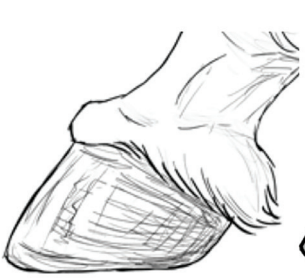
Much has changed in our ideas of right and wrong over the years. Consider this as an invitation to release some of our previous interpretations and open our sense of observation to a fully functioning hoof, as opposed to trying to imagine an ideal hoof shape. One thing we can agree on is that, in the realm of horses' feet, we often don't agree. Views and opinions can be released quickly; once new information is acquired. As one of my favorite mentors, Deepak Chopra says, "Don't let the wake drive the boat."

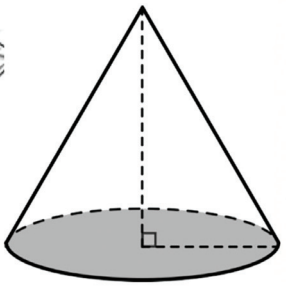
We have now outlined some of the hoof's various structural components. Structures are set and difficult to change. Anatomical laws apply to the arrangements of bone, no matter what; while shape and conformation can change with every trim.

Mechanical laws apply to live structure, especially where movement is involved. From a hoof perspective, for example, the health of the laminae attaching the coffin bone to the hoof wall is a significant contributor to the horse's overall health, well-being, strength, and function. The shape and appearance of the hoof, on the other hand, is a factor to be considered as very important, yet flexible. We alter this to align with our current perceptions of the perfect foot. And yet understanding that things change with different towns, countries, farriers, breeds and of course, the times; is our only way of readily absorbing new information.

The necessary biomechanical function of the hoof to absorb shock, to flex and pump blood and to carry the horse far and fast as he flees for his life, does not change. Of course, he is no longer required to escape from the sabre toothed tiger, but, 50 million years of evolution does not just dissolve. To this day, our horses are prey animals. Their primary defense is to run. For horses, a healthy hoof means survival. So how do we keep the biomechanics of the hoof in top form?

Consider hooves from both the internal and external, as they do not function independently. They are a three-dimensional structure. Although the internal structures can and do change in response to nourishment, varying terrain, health challenges, and other stressors, it takes a long time. With a hoof knife and a rasp, we can change the look, angles, flares, and length almost instantly. Beware that your horse will pay the price if treatment is executed incorrectly. Not promptly corrected, any poor treatment of the external hoof will cause internal problems. We have learned that one critical component of the hoof's strength lies in keeping with the optimal functioning of a basic geometric shape. The power is an asymmetrical cone, where the toe length is longer than the length at the back. From teepees to the Eiffel Tower to volcanoes - cone shapes are strong. The wider load bearing radius at ground level supports the narrowing load above. The larger circumference shape at a ground level closely matches the smaller shape at the coronet band. Proper cone shape also encourages an arch that reaches across the hoof at the base, from one side to the other, helping to create the imperative concavity of the sole. Like a bridge, arches tolerate the significant weight. The structural span is affected by the work of the farrier and the trim. The unaddressed contributing problems most often seen are underslung heels, poorly balanced flares, and too-long toes.





As the weight of the horse descends, the ground radius of the hoof cone should expand to accept the load. The proper weight-bearing function fails if the walls are too steep, the cone is imbalanced, or the hoof shape is as a cylinder or a tube. If this erroneous tube shape continues too long, problems most certainly develop.

Unlike the Eiffel tower, the anatomy of a cone-shaped hoof is designed to be biomechanically active. One may wonder why the brilliance of nature would leave the hoof's solar radius unfinished. The circle or oval shape is incomplete. It stops at the heels and turns forward toward the toe creating the bars of the hoof. Not only do the bars add additional support, but the separation at the heels allows for an expansion unrestricted by an otherwise full circumference. Natural weight-bearing function of the hoof can perform perfectly when not constrained by the metal shoe.

A further debate exists, concerning the angles of the fronts and hinds, inner and outer walls and proper toe length. Taking all this into consideration, it is not surprising that we ponder how the standard foot should look. Take one step back and accept that integral to the strength of the hoof is its' functioning cone shape. The biomechanics of weight-bearing and hoof function is a simple geometric concept.

A cylinder shape or what some call "coke can" feet do not allow the heels to spread during load bearing. Remove the metal shoes at least for a portion of the year, allowing natural hoof function to resume. Keep your horse natural and barefoot in his living environment. Use Cavallo Hoof Boots to provide comfort, protection, and safety when riding out.

University of Zurich[UZH]

Swiss Cavalry, University of Zurich, Switzerland Veterinary Medical Faculty Scientist Luca Bein - In 1984, the Swiss Cavalry conducted research into the effect of metal shoeing. Studies showed that the impact force a shod hoof receives on hard ground is 10-33 times that of an unshod hoof. The vibration in the hoof from the shoe is approximately 800 hz. This level of vibration is high enough to DESTROY LIVING TISSUE.

“The barn where we board has a cement floor in the wash bay. While bathing our horse this afternoon she slipped on the wet floor and began to panic. Once everyone was calmed down, we put her Cavallo boots on. No more slipping. They make great shower shoes.”

Kevin Rassmussen, Oregon

CHAPTER 3

IMAGINING WILD HORSES

Pressing the Hormonal Gas Pedal

Through the mist of shrouded pre-dawn dew, tails of wispy golden amber and deep ebony swish rhythmically. Two high pitched baby nickers respond immediately to the call of another. Three new foals joined the herd this spring, their gangling limbs on the move, a muscling-up day upon day. Joyful curiosity streams through the small crowd.

In one abrupt second, a deafening stillness slices the frisky activity. Ears spike forward and swivel back. The putrid taste of danger replaces that of earthy grass. Was it that barely perceptible flicker of motion off on the dawning horizon or was it the tiny rippling ground tremor felt through those sensory alive hooves? Even what may have

been a simple breeze is now a suspected deadly predator. Ancient survival triggers prepare for the lead mare's signal. The herd is on red alert. Who eats and who gets eaten?

Nature clarifies the uncertainty. Yes, it's a danger! Run! Burst into action, nose to flank, protect one another, babies in the center, be a unit, be off! Eyes stark with terror, and their bodies challenged to the test. Nature's prehistoric orchestra begins its dramatic symphony. Pupils dilate. Digestion shuts down. The flight is the only remaining requirement. The sympathetic nervous system is performing like a hormonal gas pedal; thousands of pounds thunder across the tundra on small, compact hooves. Injury, disease, or weakness will cause the hoof to fail. Failure of the hoof will cause death. They are fleeing for their lives. Survival depends on healthy functioning feet.

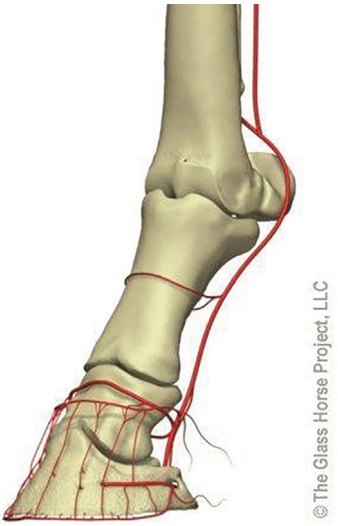
Miraculous engineering in hoof design has kept horses alive on the planet for over 50 million years! That's 50,000,000 years. Hooves are not design flaws that need nails to adequately perform.

Even if some ailment or discomfort exists, to a predator, our prey animal horse would pretend to be healthy, secure, in fighting form and ready to run. If he could talk, he would say something like "Don't even try to eat me. Don't even try to chase me. You'll never get me." With adrenalin pumping as a powerful aid, these horses run far and fast. If there is a problem, it is remedied by the gifted will to survive. When you see a horse running with complete freedom of movement and a will to survive, it is very different than many of the domestic horses we are accustomed to seeing.

Our domestication of the amazing Equiss has resulted in an assortment of lame and debilitating conditions, not the least of which is the widely diagnosed and misunderstood Navicular Disease. Tendinitis, strained ligaments, arthritis, inflammation, bursitis, and other degenerative conditions are very often a result of our domestication and readily accepted hoof care practices.

In a natural environment, a simple injury would occur more often than any of these conditions. Some say we have bred the “hoof” out of horses, but believe me, 50,000,000 years of evolution cannot be so easily ruined.

The hoof is a perfect feat of engineering. Pardon the pun! In its natural state, the foot is a miraculous structure designed with an innate intelligence to function as support for the weight of a horse in movement. In its natural state, it is a marvel of creation.

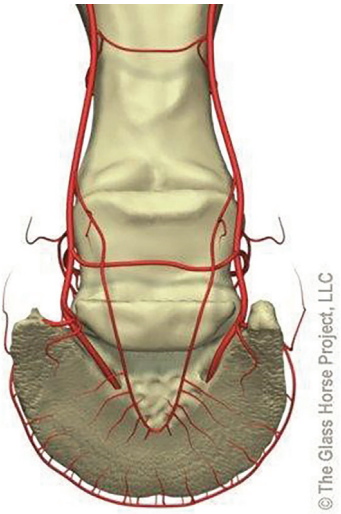


When a horse’s full weight descends, the hoof becomes sandwiched between that load and the ground. The hoof spreads apart, allowing the coffin bone to drop, like a trampoline. This mechanism is the natural shock-absorbing feature of the hoof. The walls move apart (up to 6mm from side to side), and the soles draw flat. Also, the frog pushes the heels apart, bringing the sole lower and inviting the bone structure of the leg to descend into the hoof. Shock is absorbed in the hoof capsule. If the frog cannot make ground contact and function as it should, then shock cannot be correctly absorbed, and blood cannot freely flow.

Circulation is imperative to the distribution of oxygen and nutrients throughout the system. Healthy blood flow aids in the prevention of various problems and facilitates healing. Limited blood flow leads to degeneration.

Nailing metal onto horses’ feet limits ground contact, which in turn restricts blood circulation. The horse appears to be able to move about alright, but it is because he cannot feel his feet. His hoof is numb, internal damage is developing, and he can’t feel it. All metal shoes are nailed on when the hoof is in the air, at its smallest, most contracted shape. The foot expansion function cannot operate to support the

weight adequately. It is held firm in this smallest state. There is no spreading out and no room for the coffin bone to descend properly. As the coffin bone pushes down under the horse's weight, it bruises the solar corium because the sole cannot draw flat to get out of the way. Both proper blood circulation and shock absorption are dangerously limited. Without hoof mechanism - problems percolate until, one day, there is an eruption of laminitis, navicular, ring bone, inflammation or some other issue, which can no longer be ignored. And so, begins the attempt at condition management; be it stall rest, medication, a new farrier, new exercise, different feed, supplements, etc.

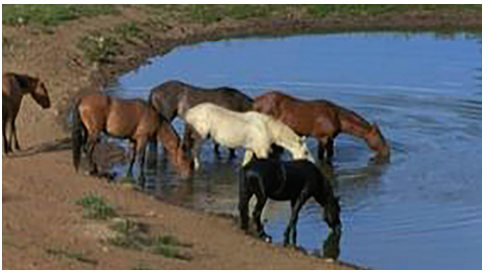


Why not go to the source of the problem and give those feet a rest? Stop clamping and nailing. Rehabilitate and attempt to cure, rather than manage. Try keeping your horse barefoot to encourage the blood to circulate through the proper channels. When infused with a host of nutrients, the hoof can flex and expand to allow shock absorption and relieve the strain to extensor tendons and lateral cartilage. Oxygen and nutrients help increase healthy new bone growth. Optimally functioning hooves will naturally show a decrease in symptoms of discomfort. Rehabilitating the hoof to perform its natural function is the only way to get to the cause and cure the condition.

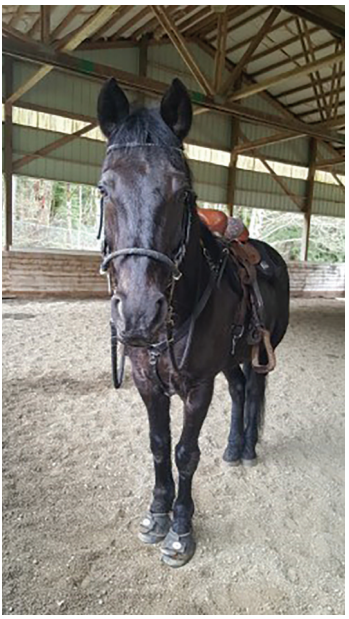
The hooves will require proper trimming, hydration, and adequate movement on appropriate terrain to emulate nature. It's not hard to do, and Cavallo Hoof Boots are an integral part of the rehabilitation process. They provide comfort, protection, and traction. Cavallos have a slightly raised rim to offset the weight of tender soles, while still maintaining an inner surface that functions as a counter-effect for hoof expansion. Cavallos will assist in encouraging blood circulation. In transition, Cavallo Gel Pads can be used to stimulate blood flow

further. If more cushion is required, you have the option of inserting Comfort Pads. And if your horse is very tender and benefits by wearing boots all-day, every-day you may wish to use Cavallo Pastern Wraps or Sleeves.

Understanding the implications of the personal choice you make in the treatment of any diagnosis is your responsibility as a horse owner. You also can choose to accept or reject a prognosis, seek another opinion, and do your research. The important thing is the quality of life your horse enjoys. Soundness is living a pain-free life.



And now, just as fast, the herd halts. The parasympathetic nervous system acts as the brake pedal. Heads relax, stretch, and resume to ground grazing. The danger has passed. They've had their workout, now to rest, restore and digest some more, until the next time, those perfectly designed hooves need to perform.



"I could not be happier with my decision to transition my horse to barefoot and choosing Cavallo for his hoof protection. I always thought that my horse just had "bad feet" and that he would always be lame barefoot until I realized that I was enabling that dependency. By allowing his feet to adapt back to the way they were naturally intended, his feet have become strong and he now seems perfectly comfortable barefoot.

With the added weight of a rider on rough terrain, I invested in my first pair of Cavallo boots. I went with the Trek boots and they fit him perfectly. I am able to do anything that I could do in metal shoes and I no longer have to stress over him losing a metal shoe and damaging his hoof wall when removed. The Cavallo boots provide him greater shock absorbency when riding on hard ground and so far, whether it be on trails or in the arena, he seems extremely comfortable in his boots. I do a variety of riding including trails, gaming and drill and am excited to get into the gaming season to truly put my boots to the test.

I believe that in horsemanship, you have to pick methods that make the most sense to you and for me- that is the naturality of barefoot and the protection of the Cavallo boots."

Brenna Eldredge and Dakota

CHAPTER 4

IS SHE ABUSING HER HORSE?

Do you know someone who has horses and doesn't care for them? I hope not. But if you are aware of anyone who is really neglecting or abusing their animal, you may want to do something about it.

Please be clear, this isn't about lack of exercise or not feeding the 'right' food or not cleaning the dirty blankets. Although some may view that as serious mismanagement. I am talking about tyranny, abuse, and exploitation. Oh yes, if you know about this, then you are responsible for acting.

Fortunately, most of us never witness anything like this. I certainly have not. It exists, I know, because I hear it on the news from time to time, but I have not, nor do I know anyone who has. No one we know gets involved with horses without the intention to care for them. Of course, there are different ideas about what is the best care, the best food, the best riding styles and of course the best trainers and farriers. We all have views and opinions on what is right and wrong. Nobody consciously and intentionally sets out to do the wrong thing.

Now in our hoof world, we are observing a gap, a chasm, a polarization between perceived right doing and wrongdoing. It is something that is becoming increasingly intense in our industry. You guessed it. It's between those who shoe horses and those who do not. With friends, I watched, as this separation and divergence developed into aggressive opposition. Two horse owners who love and care for their horses and are kind, upstanding members of their communities battling it out. Either of them would drive you to the hospital, feed your kids, pray for you, or take over the barn chores in time of need. Both are productive, hard-working, thoughtful, courageous, and vulnerable. Yet, they are so convinced that their opinion is the right thing that they are willing to alienate themselves from another nice person just to defend their point of view. They are eager to forego civility to be right.

We've all done it. At the time, it seems like a good idea. We argue for our rightness. Sometimes, we do it even when we don't have the facts and don't really know more than an opinion.

Moving outside the idea of right and wrong, we can let go of our responsibility to take sides. We can stop trying to convince others. It's not our job. Our job is to be ourselves and to accept ourselves as who we are. Once we do that it is easier to take others. I personally am firmly committed to barefoot horses. Yes! I believe it is the best thing for most horses. Could it change? Perhaps, if someone I respect could explain to me in a way I can understand, I would think differently. So far, I feel the reasons for naturally barefoot far outweigh the justification for nailing metal shoes to live tissue. But hey, I do have some terrific friends who shoe their horses. I accept them as they are: beautiful people who I have a great fondness for. I do not respect their reasons for shoeing their horses, but I still like them, and we still hang out. I must admit, for the most part, we avoid the conversation, but it is coming.

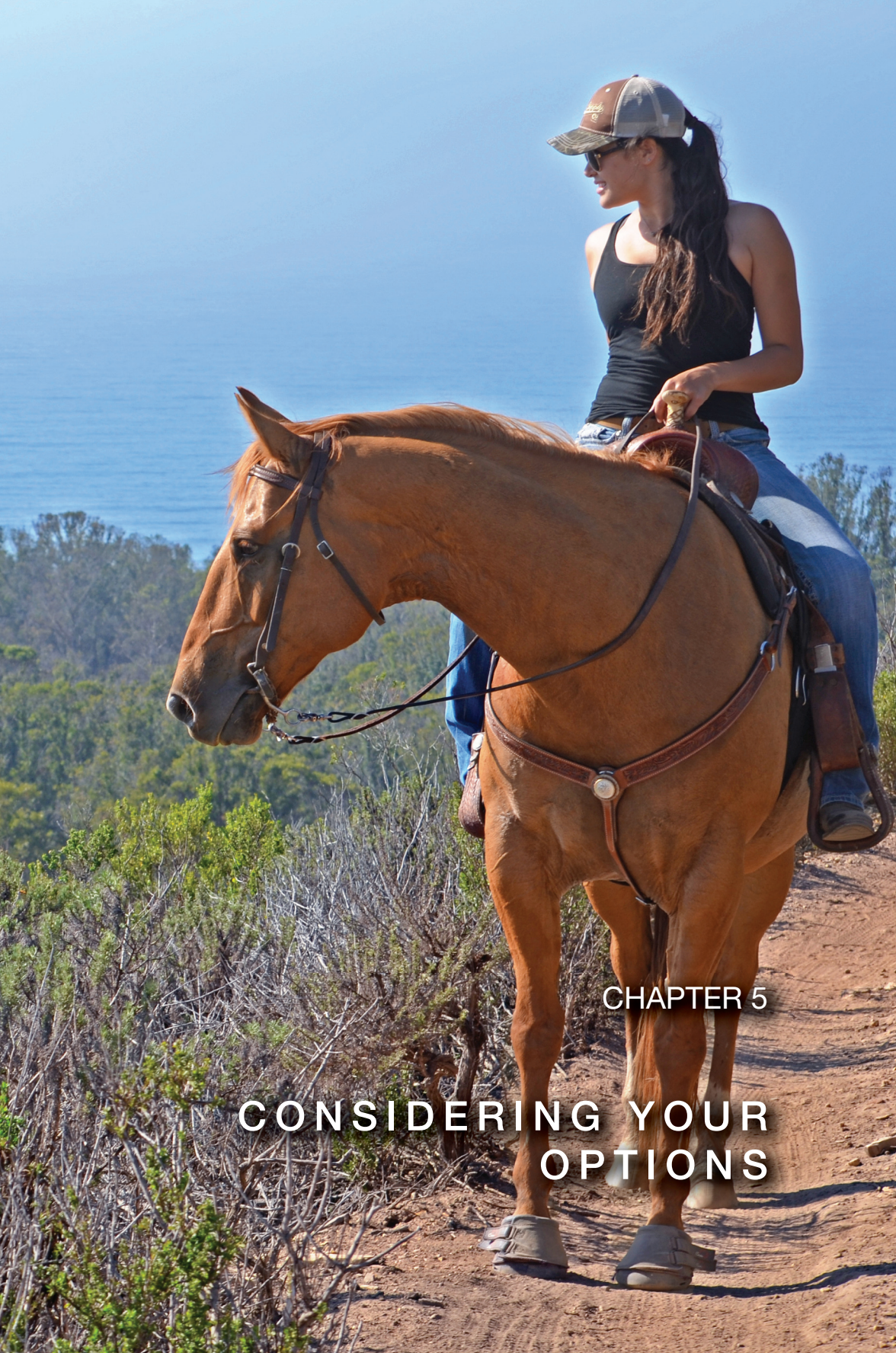
One day we'll sit down, without the emotion and more openly understand each other's reasons. We'll answer when asked, without offense or grievance. We'll listen consciously, without preoccupation of formulating our own response. We'll relinquish our attachments to advocate for our camp staunchly. After all, we want the best outcome

for everyone, don't we? Don't we? How about if we don't separate our industry even further? Don't buy into the axiom 'you are either for us or against us.' It feels better to be united, to feel convergence, to be part of a group. Let's remember why we have horses. We are horse people together. Nobody is intentionally trying to do it wrong.

These Boots Are Made for Riding

Horses hooves condition to tolerate the terrain of their habitat. During climate changes their hooves also change. Many horses live on grassy pastures and bedded stalls. Hooves condition to the ground of their living environment. Perhaps for 5% or even a generous 10% of the time, we ask them to pack us up a gravelly trail or hard asphalt road. Their hooves are not accustomed to hard terrain, and the load is increased by our weight and the weight of our saddles. This additional weight can be 20% of their body weight, on average about 200 pounds. It compresses the soles of their feet even further into the ground. For this reason, they need additional hoof protection.

Most horses are uncomfortable traveling outside their living conditions with extra weight on bare feet. It's clear that our horses do need protection while being ridden. I see horses trying to make their way to the soft shoulder at the side of the road all the time. Nailing metal shoes to their feet is not the answer. The shape of a metal shoe does nothing to protect their soles. The metal does not absorb shock but sends concussion further up the limbs. And the nails restrict the shoe and clamp the hoof in a tight position so that it cannot flex to respond to the weight of the horse. Taking care of your horse's physical being is central to his overall well-being. When you get opportunities to ride your horse, you can very quickly provide safety and protection to his hooves with Cavallo Hoof Boots. Your horse's grace, beauty, and strength are enhanced or diminished by his physical health and *comfort.*



CHAPTER 5

CONSIDERING YOUR OPTIONS

History Lesson 101

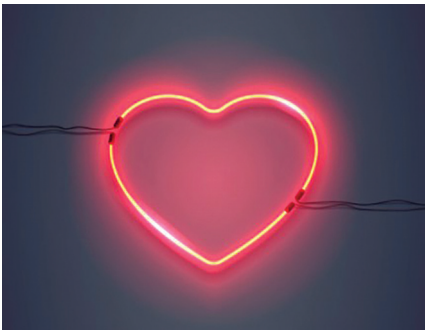
Shoeing horses with metal shoes began over 1500 hundred years ago when horses were captured and trained for use in battle. The confined horse's hoof became weakened by a fetid environment and a lack of movement. Limited movement meant restricted blood circulation and a significant loss of nutrient supply to the hoof. The hoof began to rot. Metal shoes were intended to elevate the hoof out of the manure and urine-saturated ground where the horse was tied. The premise was that the elevation would stop the hoof decay. Not surprisingly, the rot worked its way between the metal plate and the hoof. Cutting out the middle of the metal plate and leaving the rim, was thought to allow some breathability and air circulation. Hence originated the current shape of the metal horseshoe. Nothing much has changed. It wasn't the best solution, but horses were becoming valuable as war vehicles and stomping on the enemy with a metal shoe was considered an effective weapon.

What's Happening Now

When asked why horse owners nail metal into horses' feet; our survey results indicate that they believe this may protect the hoof. The other response is because it has always been this way, and the third, most honest response, is that they don't know. What we do know is that the experience of lameness is not unfamiliar. As horse owners, we seem destined to endure problems with our horse's hooves. It could be anything from a thrown shoe or abscess to a severe injury or navicular diagnosis.

Five Hearts and Hoof Mechanism

We can simplify things by understanding and accepting that the hoof is an extraordinary structure designed with an innate intelligence to function as support for the weight of a horse in movement. In its natural



state, it is an engineering marvel. You may have heard it said that a horse has five hearts; four on the ground and one in the chest. The reference describes the frog's blood pumping function, circulating blood down through the extremities and back again. The frog spreads the heel apart, drawing the sole flat and inviting the bone structure of the leg to descend into the hoof. This function is the way shock is absorbed in the hoof capsule. Circulation is imperative to the distribution of nutrients throughout the system, and healthy blood flow aids in problem prevention and facilitates healing. Limiting blood flow leads to degeneration. If the frog cannot make ground contact and function as it should, then shock cannot happen adequately and, blood cannot freely flow.

Metal shoes nailed into the hoof clamps it in its smallest most contracted position. Both proper blood circulation and shock absorption become dangerously impeded. Furthermore, when the hoof lands on a hard surface, the shock is referred up the legs.

Take a metal shoe and bang it against a hard surface. You will feel the tremors vibrate up your arm. Try it. Even the nails cause vibration which will compromise the integrity and break down hoof structure. If you have been told that metal shoes provide protection, please consider hoof construction. The outside walls of the hoof are already hard. It is the softer vulnerable middle sole area that is more vulnerable.

Dr. Robert Bowker, DVM

From Horse & Rider, Feb. 2006, 'Is Barefoot Better' "The blood in horses' feet does much more than provide nutrients to hoof tissues. It also enables the unshod foot to function as a hydraulic system, in much the same way that gel-filled athletic shoes do. We need to be trimming hooves so that more of the back part of the foot — including the frog — bears the initial ground impact forces and weight. Horseshoes provide a much smaller surface area to absorb shock. So, if a bare hoof landing after a jump experiences, say, 1,000 pounds of loading per square foot, then with a traditional shoe, there's going to be 2,000 pounds per square foot. Dr. Robert Bowker, DVM

Even if you pull the metal shoes off for a period, you will create an opportunity to assist the hoof in regaining proper function. And you can keep riding too! An excellent alternative is to use hoof boots so that your horses' hooves can function unrestricted; expand and contract to absorb shock and circulate blood and oxygen naturally. Functional hoof boots allow you to ride over any terrain at any speed with safety and protection.

"I LOVE Cavallo hoof boots. I use the Trek boots slims for my mule. They work great on my mule. I have tried several different brands and the Cavallo slim fit Trek boots are the only ones that fit right and stay on. I have never had one come off ever not even in very deep mud. They last for years and are well worth the investment. I have never had them rub my mule at all. I use them mostly on the front, but I do have a set for all four feet."

Meredith Andrew

CHAPTER 6

SIX FUNCTIONAL HOOF TIPS

1. Love Your Trimmer

In a natural wild herd environment, horses will easily travel 10 miles a day foraging for food on rough, aggressive terrain and naturally trimming their hoofs to suit the environment. Your barefoot trimmer must trim your horse to compensate for the lack of natural habitat and movement. Your trimmer must balance the effects of your horse's domesticity. Your trimmer should be someone you feel comfortable with who provides an excellent explanation to any of your questions and who allows you space and leniency to learn; to understand and to be a part of what your trimmer is doing to your horse's hoofs. If not, move on.

2. Watch for Hoof Mechanism

The proper function of the hoof means the heels expand when bearing weight to allow the structure of the horse to descend and the hoof capsule to flex and absorb that shock. Expansion and contraction can be achieved in a combination of ways and by providing frequent trims tailored to the individual barefoot horse on his specific terrain. Proper hoof function requires that blood circulate freely, providing nutrients to all the live tissue of the hoof. This is accomplished through free movement, flexion and pumping action of a natural bare foot.

3. Help Your Horse Move

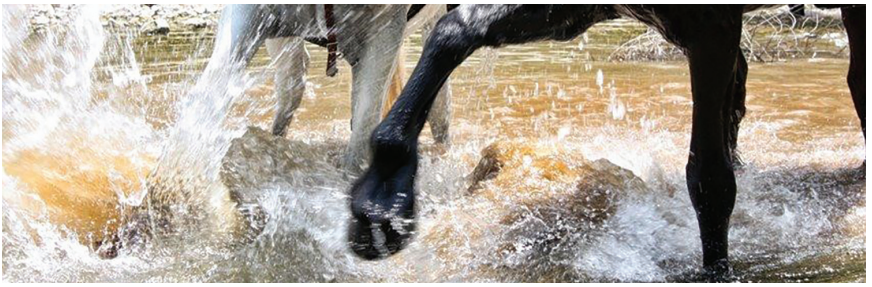
Your horse wants to move. It is essential not only for the physiology of his hoofs and overall physical well-being but for a psychological state. He feels better when he's fit. Studies have shown that stalled horses with the restricted movement have more health and behavior problems than those allowed freedom. Anyone who doubts this is advised to walk into the bathroom and close the door - stand there all day doing nothing, moving minimally, talking to no one. One may develop some odd twitches, anxiety, or crankiness along with a good understanding of how a confined horse feels. And humans only have 2 legs!

4. The Social Club

Horses will move around more when kept in a herd, where social interaction provides motivation to move. Their hoofs function when they are moving – expansion and contraction, blood circulation. They create hierarchies of order which provide comfort within the herd. They bond and groom and play. They are not meant to be coddled, bedded, and pampered like us. Let them be the horses they are. They will have differences of will and opinion, but they will work it out. That's their job. Sure, there may be some bumps and bruises in the process, but bare hoofs cause far less damage or injury than metal shoes!

5. Need a Drink

When horses need hydration, they are happy to stand in a creek or watering hole for a period. Well-hydrated hoofs have elasticity which promotes the all-important hoof mechanism. Water also allows for a simpler trimming procedure, especially in dry weather — well-hydrated hoofs are so much easier to work with. Our domestic horses are given water in buckets, and this compromises their feet. Consider your horse's environment and add water or a mud pool in an area your horse must move through. Water is preferred over commercial products as many moisturizers available on the market contain alcohol, solvents, and other agents that draw moisture out. As with many authentic solutions, there are often no quick fix shortcuts. You may have to stand with your horse while soaking. Or you can simply use your Cavallo Hoof Boots. Cover the built-in drainage holes with duct tape and fill the boots with water. Your horse can freely rumble around hydrating his own feet.



6. Provide Hoof Protection

Our domestic mounts no longer move with the herd many miles a day foraging for food on the hard-arid ground and hydrating hoofs in watering holes. Often their movement is limited to an average of 2 or 3 rides per week. Their hoofs are conditioned to their living environment: grassy pastures and bedded stalls. They are conditioned to tolerate the terrain of their habitat. But then for 5% or even a generous 10% of the time, we ask them to pack us up a gravelly trail or hard asphalt road. Remember, their hoofs may not be accustomed outside terrain, and the load is increased with our weight and the weight of our saddles. An additional 200 extra pounds is about 20% of their own body weight!

"My mare has worn Cavallo Simple Boots for the past three years. My horse and I are happy customers! I decided to buy a pair of the Trek boots recently. I really like these Trek boots. They are light but super sturdy and my horse moves so well in them. And they are super easy to put on and take off. I totally recommend them! This is my mare wearing her Cavallo Trek boots on a trail ride in the mountains of New Mexico."

Lisa Westfall

CHAPTER 7

CHOOSING YOUR HOOF CARE PARTNER

As president of Cavallo, one of the most exciting parts of my job is the personal stories people share with me about their experience with their horse's hooves. The process of transitioning from shod to barefoot or making a change from one farrier to another is fraught with a variety of emotions and tumultuous growing pains. Whether you want to improve a condition or prevent an ailment, your involvement in the treatment of your horse's hooves is imperative to success.

My First Farrier

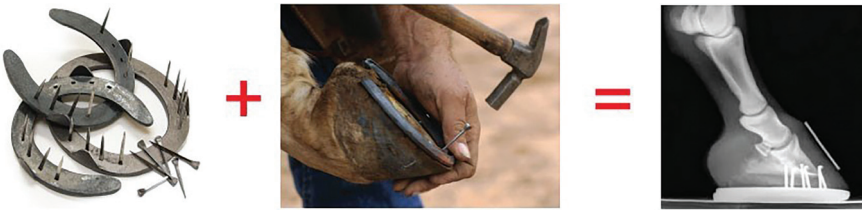
He arrived in a roaring metallic blue one ton dually, heard a mile before he reached the property. Big lumbering body with smiling brown eyes and a mass of sandy hair. His voice was deep bravado and his laughing eyes were kind. This is the guy who will spare me. He would be my savior from enduring lameness, disease, contracted heels, thrush, seedy toe, and all those other horrible afflictions, that I'd been reading about. Jim had a certain air about him like he knew something no one else knew. I imagined he had just been breaking a feisty colt or wrestling a steer. For right or wrong, I immediately looked up to him. This was a man's man.

Intimidated by Lack of Knowledge

I have told this story before and am repeating a version of it here, because this is a pivotal point for everything. This experience was the trajectory that launched me into the person I am today. We all have reasons for who we become and one of my convictions to change the world for horses, is a result of this day with Jim the Farrier. As a new horse owner, I felt self conscious, confused and vulnerable as he sauntered slowly around my horse, Rocky. He grunted, hummed, and hawed appearing extremely important. Then he got to work with Big Man tools, clanging metal to the hissing fire of his forge. It was a

powerful evocation of respect. I was speechless, gazing on and barely breathing in awe.

That is until I began to understand the procedure, do my homework, and ask the pertinent questions. This was when skepticism replaced esteem. If this man had answered any of my questions with something more than patronizing condescension, I would have backed off. Instead, what he said was, “Carole this is man’s work. You leave this business of the horse feet to me – you just get your butt in the saddle and ride”. I felt insulted. This was not the educated answer I was looking for.



Back to the Study Hall

Sometimes there is just no easy way. To the books, diagrams, and veterinary manuals I went. I remember pouring over Dr. Stasser’s textbook twice, and even then, it made my mind feel soft and mushy

like scrambled eggs - so much scientific data! Maybe he was right. Perhaps I should just get in the saddle and ride. The thing is, when particular doors open to unveil a compelling new direction, there is no turning back. I attended seminars. The leg and hoof dissections left me washing blood and putrid stench off my skin for days. I joined and promoted communities of like-minded advocates. Ultimately, I was rewarded with understanding. My line of questioning was indeed valid. I viewed the farrier's work with increased scrutiny. Big 'wows' in the hairline, one side of the hoof consistently higher than the other. His right hand was stronger than his left, which resulted in more horn off one side of the foot than the other, as he worked his way around. This meant imbalances and asymmetries because he would work from one front about to the hind and then up to the other front. So, the high side was on the opposite side of the horse. Underslung heels? Oh, ok, we'll fix those by extending the metal shoes behind so that the heels grow into them. It never works because the entire hoof grows, not just the heels. Contracted heels? Oh, ok, we'll only widen the shoes a smidge, as if a ½ cm fuller shoe would create a wider hoof. But, anyway, can't do it too much or they will step on the overhang and pull the shoe off. Did the shoe pull off? We'll just put 8 nails in and make sure the last ones are right at the back.

I'd complain, "It's not working – my horse still has contracted feet. They are underslung, imbalanced, and he moves stiffly."

"You just can't see the positive changes. This was all created by the last farrier and takes some time to fix. Your horse is happy. Get your butt in the saddle and ride." This was his polite response. Nothing changes.

Dr. Robert Cook, FRCVS, PhD, Professor of Surgery Emeritus at Tufts University- "All horses hooves are healthier without shoes, and barefoot horses are healthier than shod horses. They live longer, happier, less painful lives. Barefoot is a requirement for health and should be accepted as a condition for keeping a horse. Humane management is not just preferable, it is non-negotiable. The foot evolved to function unshod. Nature has developed the perfect design for grip and slide in all conditions and provided for unsurpassable shock absorption. The foot cannot expand and contract with each step when clamped. Blood supply to the foot is impoverished and horn production becomes deficient. When the foot is prevented from functioning correctly, the pastern, fetlock, cannon, and knee are also placed at risk. This leads to bone, joint and soft tissue injuries".

Reaching the Turning Point

From that day forward, I undertook to make my own decisions for the well-being of my horse. I would never again accept condescension. I would not be patronized or demeaned.

It wasn't just that my Rocky had extraordinary problems. I went on to own four more horses that I could not keep 100% sound all the time and whose hoofs rarely looked good enough to my developing, discerning eye. This is a typical pattern for us. To improve, we change farriers, experiment with various feeds, supplements, or hoof

dressings, give our horse's time off or try different exercise programs; all with no consistent results. It can be very discouraging. I assure you that you are not alone. You are no longer obliged to keep your farrier, doing the same thing to your horses, simply because there seems to be no better option. Our entire industry is changing. There are tough decisions to make, especially when we ask our long-time family-friend farrier to include us in the hoof care decisions and he refuses!

LA Mounted Posse

Trailblazers Walk Alone

Psychologist Soloman Asch called his experiment a 'vision test.' Of the eight men in the room at Pennsylvania's Swarthmore College, only one was the real test subject. The others were told precisely how to answer the test questions. The subject believed the others were also involved as testing participants and remained unaware of the ruse. This is a famous experiment, used to study conformity in groups. Overall, 50 students were used.

The 'vision study' participants were shown a series of lines and asked which ones were the same. The real participant did not know that the others were instructed to answer the question incorrectly. Even though the answer was wrong, 75% of the test subjects conformed to that group answer at least once.

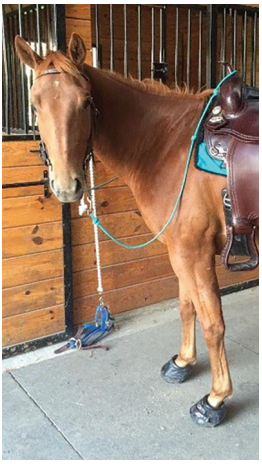
There are two main reasons for going along with a group answer. Firstly, people seem to want to fit in and fear to appear different, standing out or being ridiculed. Secondly, a person may believe that the group knows more about something or understands it better than they do. They don't trust their own conclusions when the group is saying something different. It takes courage to be true to your own beliefs and stand up for what you know is right. It takes courage to do something different with your horse when everyone else in your barn is doing the same thing. There is a lot of pressure to stay the same as the group.

Choose Cavallo

At Cavallo, we sympathize, because we have been there ourselves. It`s like breaking up with your best friend or teacher or hairdresser! Sometimes you must leave people behind. But do it! Take control. Take your power. Be non-negotiable about getting your requests met. Do not waiver from your own beliefs about what is right. Make a commitment to deserving what is true, both for yourself and for your horse. You now have options. Many fantastic trimmers are entering the previously male-dominated farrier world. Find someone you like, someone who meets you on your level, without a condescending attitude and is willing to spend the time to help you and your horse. If you feel there is a better option than those metal shoes, pull them off. You now have healthier options. Let us help you with the total comfort and protection of Cavallo Hoof Boots. We are here to support, guide, and assist you in every way we can.

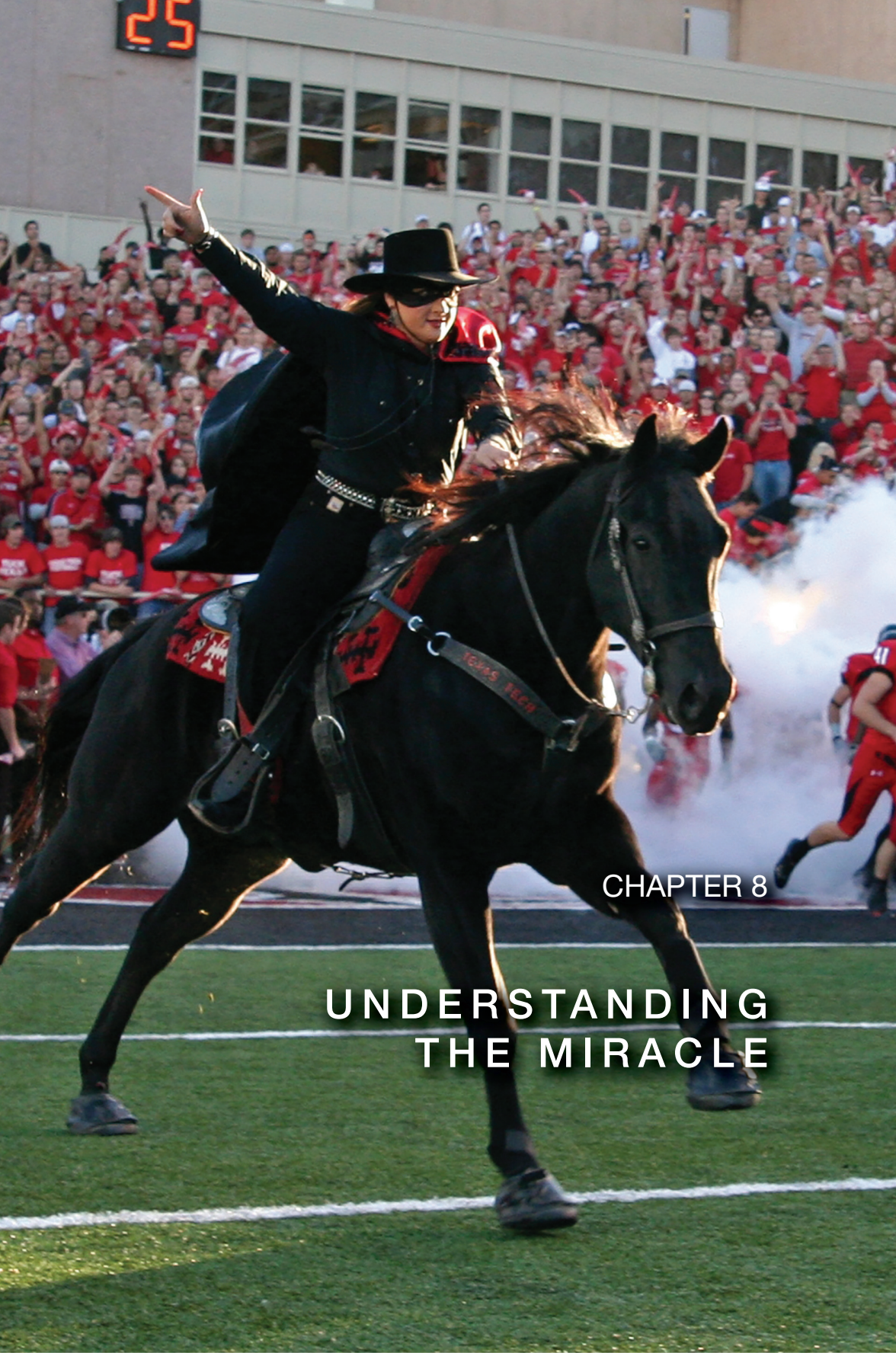
"Camping and trail riding this past weekend, my mare wearing her size 3 slim Cavallo boots... had to go through a few areas of deep mud as well as through water and up/down some slippery grass hills. Boots stayed in place, didn't have any slipping issues, and my horse was able to travel comfortably over varied terrain. Took a while to get the right fit, but now that we have it, we are golden."

Kim VanDrisse



"My boots DO let me enjoy time with my BFF. I love Dusty's boots. Super simple on and off. No issues with rubbing. We do all terrains and in and out of the water with no issues. One of the best purchases I've ever made!"

Robin Beatty Thompson



CHAPTER 8

UNDERSTANDING THE MIRACLE

At times, the most neglected part of the horse's anatomy, the hoof, is at the forefront of the smart horseperson's awareness. Healthy feet mean survival to this animal. The condition and level of health affect several other bodily functions and overall wellbeing. If you own a horse, it is your responsibility to understand the role of this miraculous structure. Like many valued discoveries, once you become aware, you do not turn back. We now understand that our fancy saddles, color-coordinated bridles, and monogrammed pads have little value without a healthy horse to put them on. Let's start with the very foundation and work from the ground up. It's like the analogy that buildings constructed on weak foundations will fall. The comparison is that you can't ride a lame horse.

Move past the idea of riding horses and understand that without good feet, horses' lives fall short of optimum. They are flight animals. If they can't run away, they do not make it. You may think this is not applicable today while looking at your horse standing in the comfort of a secure barn. There are no crouching tigers ready to pounce. The mountain lions are up in the hills. But remember, we are talking about 50 million years of evolution. Make no mistake that paying attention to healthy hooves is as essential today as it ever was. We would say that it is even more imperative today because of the imposed domesticity and human interference, which can compromise the natural hoof function.

So, what is a healthy hoof, and what can we do to cultivate it. Let's continue with a simple description of what we can readily see with our naked eye. We'll then move into an example of some common problems that are easily within our ability to control.

The hoof consists of an inner layer called Corium, and a harder outer shell that is like our fingernail material. The softer Bulbs are at the back, behind the Hoof Wall. The Frog is pie shaped with the point towards the toe and angling out towards the Bulbs. There are two grooves on either side of the frog called Frog Sulci or Collateral Grooves and through the center is a cleft called the Central Sulcus. What we call The Bars are the continuations of the outside hoof wall, pivoting at The Buttress to form another triangle shape that borders the Sulci. It's a beautiful example of perfected patterns of nature. The Buttress is the point where the outside wall turns back up towards the Toe. The Hoof Wall is sturdy and should be somewhat flexible and fibrous. It surrounds the entire hoof and divides into three parts – the Heel, Toe and Quarters. The Sole at the bottom provides support for the major internal structures. The White Line is the material between the Sole and the Wall, which can be clearly seen after a fresh trim. This line can be subject to disease.

There are various theories of the cause of White Line Disease. One is that it is an invasive fungus that enters the area through the sole. Another is that bacteria appear as a result of injury and damage to the hoof wall. It can also be a result of chronic laminitis, which has several causes. And finally, some current theory holds that it is a metabolic disturbance involving aging. The thing we know for sure with White Line Disease is that the white line material is not healthy. Now, this too can be a result of various factors. Why did the wall or sole become weak enough to allow invasive bacteria to enter? Why does the disease take hold when some horses get injured and not others?

Catching it early is a big part of the battle. You should start by cleaning and examining the hoof regularly, looking for any signs of trauma, sores, disturbances or openings in the hoof wall and sole. If something looks questionable, treat it. You can use preventative methods easily by turning to a natural treatment that is not toxic or does not have harmful side effects. I always suggest apple cider vinegar for bacterial problems and tea tree oil for wounds. White Line Disease does not like air. It's called an Anaerobic Condition, thriving on an absence of oxygen. When you apply a treatment, you can protect it and keep it in place with your Cavallo Hoof Boots. Make sure to remove them

occasionally because the area also needs air to heal. It's a bit of a balancing act to alternate between treatment and air exposure. In this case, do not leave your boots on 24/7. You can also cover the drainage holes on your Cavallos and then pour a soaking solution into them. It's a great way to soak the hoof without having to stand your horse in a bucket. Then after a 30-60-minute soak, dry the foot thoroughly and expose the clean treated hoof to air. Check it frequently. If it does not respond to your treatment quickly, call your Vet.

Bacterial disease is most often progressive. It gets worse without treatment and can re-occur over time. After you have treated the symptom, look for the original cause. Balancing the hoof is of utmost importance. Your trimmer should be well versed in front to back, side to side balance and requirements of a hoof to support a thousand-pound horse. With a white line problem, separation is usually present. Leveraging the hoof wall away from the hoof, is like pulling a long fingernail away from the finger. Ouch! Detachment can be avoided and corrected with proper trimming.

The nutrients in freely flowing blood can help heal the problem and prevent further damage to the hoof. Encourage your horse to move. Movement helps blood circulate. He will be sore, so use your Cavallo Hoof Boots to protect his feet and get your horse moving. Increasing the nutrients and oxygen with increased blood flow will go a long way towards wellness. Proper circulation helps to encourage the hoof strength and elasticity required to support your horse from the ground up.

“Over the last year we have struggled to keep front shoes on Cato, our 17h warmblood dressage horse, especially after the wet muddy winter we have had here in the UK. After much research and recommendations from my farrier, we bought him a pair of your Simple boots. Now he can still have a varied training plan and go out and enjoy hacking as well as doing his dressage training in an arena barefoot.”

Georgina Seal

CHAPTER 9

FEEDING THE FEET

We now understand that hooves are blood pumping devices meant to circulate blood throughout the hoof and back up to the heart. The system is a full circulatory system; a fully functioning nutritional arrangement that operates most effectively when adequately fueled. It's like the gasoline in your car. If you're racing a Maserati, the fuel requirements are different from your occasionally used farm truck.

Everything is Connected

Horses extract what they require for their health and fitness from the earth. Plants grown in the ground feed the cellular structure of our horses. Mineral deficiency can be quite a problem for our domestic horses. Weakness or imbalance of minerals inhibits the formation of enzymes that support immune function, digestion, glucose metabolism, and overall health, including the quality of bone, muscle, and hoof tissue. The common deficiencies are magnesium, chromium, copper, zinc, and selenium. Be aware that this is not a simple situation where more is better, because something like too much calcium can cause a magnesium deficiency. Your horse is a dynamic living ecosystem. Her body is composed of and conditioned to that which makes up the environment. It's a symbiotic relationship.

Healthy horses instinctively try to balance and self-regulate. Observing horses left to roam freely, we see that they may find plants that are growing in calcium-rich soils. They then travel miles in another direction to munch plants abundant in phosphorus and support balance in their system. Now let's say, you give your horse a supplement that claims to improve hoof health by providing zinc. If your horse lacks in zinc, he will use it in a general application throughout the body, and you may not see results in the hoof tissue specifically. If there is an already existing imbalance, his system is unable to send the nutrients to specific areas.

Feed Your Horse's Feet

Changes in animal feed, climate, farming and food-processing methods, soil conditions, water quality, and weather patterns, as well as increased use of genetic engineering and toxic pesticides, all harm the quality of food available.

Some say that horses eating good quality pasture or hay take in all the

nutrient energy needed. Not so. Many fields producing hay are overworked. The hay no longer contains natural vitamins, minerals, proteins, good bacteria, and enzymes necessary for a healthy horse.

Build from the Ground Up

Building health from the foundation we must work toward overall nutrition and mineral balance. Once overall health is achieved, specific things like weak hoof integrity disappear. Healthier overall, his hoofs look great, and you haven't even given him a hoof supplement.

Of course, we can't just turn our horses loose and say, "Go look for nutrition." My horses would have a very long way to travel because we live in a rain forest, and much of what they require from the earth gets washed away. You could try emulating the benefits provided by a natural environment, by offering your horse free choice of the four main ingredients that boost sufficient mineral content Salt, Calcium, Phosphorous and Trace Minerals (which include Copper, Chromium, Fluoride, Iodine, Iron, Molybdenum, Manganese, Selenium and Zinc). You may be astonished to find he will chow down on one thing for a period and then suddenly, not touch it, and move on to something else. He is self-regulating. Then after gobbling up the other stuff, he stops. He has achieved a mineral balance. Now if you want to focus on a specific area - the supplement provided would have a better chance to be utilized effectively.

Your Horse is Not a Cow

www.safergrass.org

Some outstanding compounds have been created by reputable companies that can make it easy to offer your horse free choice minerals. Just watch out for bogus marketing schemes. Don't fall for things like the salt block. Horses don't have the same tongues as cows that can extract the salt off the lick.

Additionally, there are often toxic binding agents in the mix to hold the block together, which further compromise your horse's system. I've even seen claims that salt blocks include appropriate minerals. Very questionable. Pelletized feed can fall into this category. While touting mineral richness when there's hardly enough to make a difference, they include glues and other binding agents in the manufacturing process that threaten health.

Consider your horse's activity, age, health, digestive issues, and level of fitness. Asking your horse to perform on a level beyond his physiological capability is unfair.

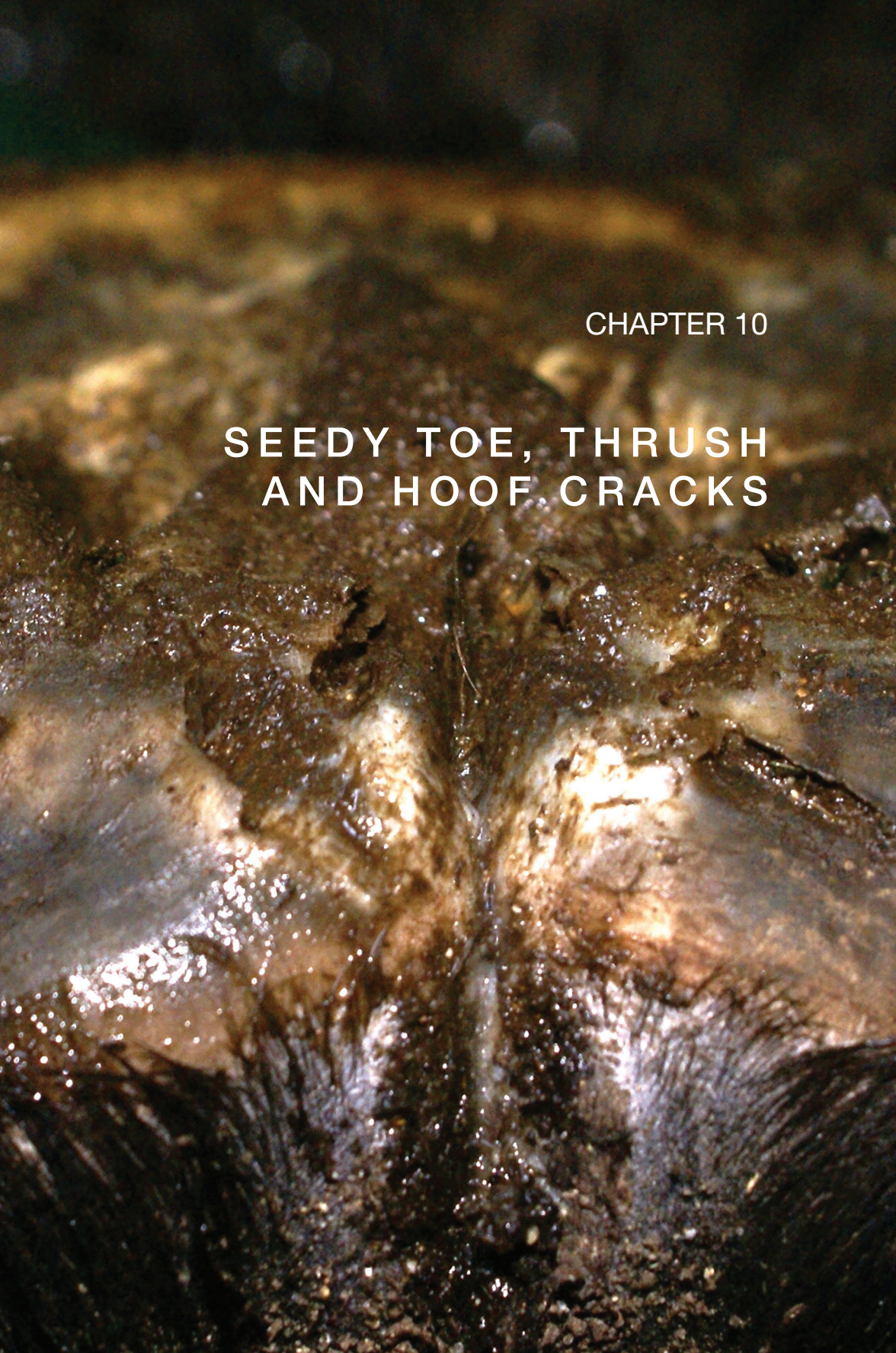
As nature intended, horses should be fed regularly to keep their digestive systems functioning. Watch for any mastication problems and make sure the teeth are sound. Avoid moldy, musty, dusty, frozen, and sweet feed. Watch his manure for changes in color, quantity, consistency, and odor. Notice behavior, coat quality, brightness in the eye, contentment, and level of energy. Make sure a plentiful supply of fresh water is available. If your water quality is unsure, you could get it tested for infectious organisms, such as salmonella or toxicity. Consult with a veterinarian to determine if there is any cause for concern.

Above All – Have Fun

Ride your horse often, have loads of fun and as always, use Cavallo Hoof Boots to provide safety, protection, and shock absorption.

“My mare, Salarina, loves her Cavallo Trek boots. She has been wearing Cavallo boots for about 6 years now (first the Simple Boot - then the Sport Boot and now the Trek Boot). I still have all of them but find the Trek very easy. The pair she is wearing is about 2 years old and still going strong.”

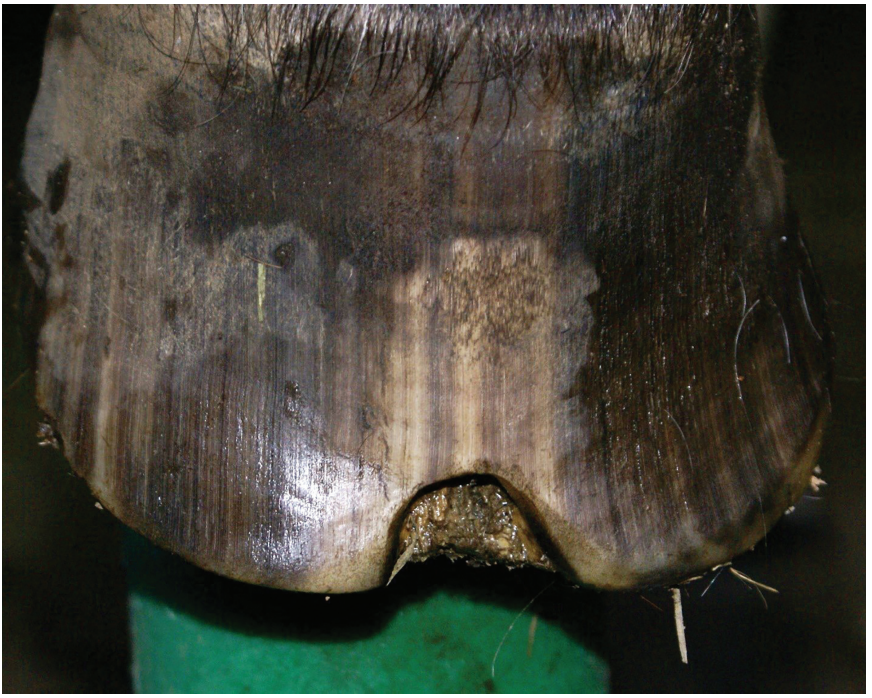
Dagmar Loptien and Salarina



CHAPTER 10

SEEDY TOE, THRUSH AND HOOF CRACKS

4 Simple Tips to Makes Sure You Win



Nutrients

Hooves require nutrients. It's not complicated, and nature provides. Horses are enduring survivors. They are not like cows and interestingly can subsist in areas where cows and sheep cannot. Even if the food digested is lower quality, if it is high fiber, horses digest huge amounts. Feeding them cultivated high proteins that they can quickly gobble up, is not appropriate for their natural digestive system. Starchy sugars and fructose can lead to any number of hoof-related problems. Slow Feeders are an excellent way to slow

the process down deliberately, so they are not gorging, but instead eating small amounts with continuous mastication as nature intended. Keep the feeder low or on the ground, as a head-down position is best for your horse's digestion.

Balance

In a wild horse environment, horses move around 10-20 or even 40 miles a day on hard, aggressive terrain, ultimately trimming their hooves to accommodate their bodies. When keeping a domestic horse, it is our responsibility to ensure their feet are properly balanced and correctly trimmed. To alleviate many of the problems our horses endure, your trimming program should mirror what happens naturally.

Treatments

Thrush is tenacious and smelly - characterized by a foul odor involving the frog and the central and lateral sulci. The area should be cleaned out with antiseptic, protected from mud and moisture, and kept

dry. You may have to delve deep into sensitive tissue to clean the infestation out, and it can be painful for your horse. It should then be treated with an antibacterial product. Be diligent and treat thrush daily or you will not conquer its obstinate persistence.

A horizontal hoof crack is referred to as a “blowout”. It results from an injury to the coronary band or a blow to the hoof. These cracks will generally not increase in size, will heal on their own, and can often go unnoticed. On the other hand, the vertical varieties are most often a result of hoof imbalance. All that may be required is to remove the bacteria and re-balance the hoof. Horses have incredible healing power, and in this case, new growth is essential for healing. You may use one of several repair products to patch the crack but be very cautious not to trap moisture inside.

Seedy toe cannot exist without white line separation which stems from inadequate nutrition, lack of movement (hoof mechanism) or a badly imbalanced hoof. Thankfully all the above can be resolved. It may require a Veterinarian for a possible diagnosis of insulin resistance, (which then relates back to the feed program), or she may advise a hoof re-section. You could pack the white line separation with an antifungal batting which should be kept dry and protected.

Hoof Boots

Trying to keep your horse’s hooves dry and protected while rehabilitating a problem can be challenging. Hoof boots will ease your efforts. Leave your horse barefoot so that you can often and efficiently treat the issue while maintaining a good balanced trim to correct negative mechanical forces. Boots will help to hold the batting or treatments in place. The drainage holes in Cavallo Boots can easily be blocked with duct tape to allow poultice treatments and bandaging. When riding out, you’ll likely remove the tape to re-establish drainage. Your horse will be more inclined to move as he will be more comfortable with sole protection. The indispensable aid in healing hoof problems, Cavallo Hoof Boots can easily be used when riding.

Have Fun – Go Riding

Get out there and ride. Horses thrive on movement and increased circulation. It can be that simple. There is useful information readily available for you to learn more. Hopefully, your farrier / trimmer can be your best resource. Find someone you can talk to and who's company you enjoy; someone who answers your questions in a way you can understand. Do not overreact when you discover a problem. Horses have an amazing ability to heal, and very often with treatments - less is best.

"Due to having two surgeries and some other medical issues, this is the first time I've been on my sweet POA Tucker in 15 months! We had to try out our new green Treks and we loved them! We only rode around the place for a short time, but what a feeling!"

Kathy Deaton and Tucker

CHAPTER 11

FOUR WAYS TO ASSIST YOUR HORSE THROUGH SEASON CHANGE

Weather patterns and vegetal growth have a significant impact on animals who live outside. Transitioning between seasons can be challenging, especially when conditions change dramatically. Properly managing some vital practices will provide your horse with the best chance for weathering these potentially severe fluctuations.

Seasonally Affected

Exposure to extreme wind, rain, and sun can take a toll on your horse's immune system. Physical protection for your horse means a safe, adequately spacious, clean, and dry shelter. We can easily

get caught up in the glamour of building these big, plush, beautiful stables with all the bells and whistles. I have seen a few barns that are posher and better equipped than some homes for humans. However, when it comes to shelter, all your horse needs are cover from the rain or excessive sun and refuge from the wind. Although stalls are a great shelter, they shelter your horse and are not a place to store him. When stored in a stall, for too long, your horse feels sad, bored, lonely, forgotten, and stressed out. It can happen when the weather is awful. A disorder called 'learned helplessness' can occur when the horse feels he has no control to change or alter the circumstances of his life. Worse, it may imply that any expression of helplessness might result in an unwanted reaction. A precursor to what some refer to as the 'silent epidemic of equine depression'; it can be the reason horses develop habits like cribbing, weaving, and stomping. Your horse is essentially a wild animal and does not respond well to confinement, restriction, or aloneness.

"Care, and not fine stables,
makes a good horse."
- Danish Proverb

Food and Medicine

It's essential to select feed and quantities of food based on the health and activity level of your horse. If your horse is more sedentary for a period, or older, he will need less food than if he is an extremely active competitor. An older horse may need his hay soaked to make it easier to chew and digest. If your horse is struggling, it is always best to consider natural remedies and preventative care over chemical compounds from big pharmaceutical companies. This line of thinking then opens the controversial issue of worming; as some companies and even some veterinarians want to sell wormer products. It can be a big business for them. If you do give your horse commercial wormers, it is good practice to do it when conditions change. I have even heard

that a full moon encourages the parasites to move together at the base of the intestinal tract, which would seem like a perfect time to blast them. Either way, give your horse a cycle of probiotics after the worming to help rebalance the natural flora in the gut.

Your horse's digestive system consists of millions of micro-organisms in miles of the intestinal tract that contribute to either his health and wellness or create disease and impaction. It's good to keep things as consistent and regular as possible throughout changing conditions. The weather can affect the growth of crops and the composition of the forage he is munching on. Again, an excellent way to breeze through these fluctuations is by providing a high-quality Pro-Biotic to support and promote healthy bacteria. And be wary of the ingredients the feed industry packages up and markets to us. Usually, you get what you pay for. Look for good quality because often the less expensive products either have fewer active ingredients or cannot be readily absorbed by your horse. Of course, and as you well know, you should always make a good supply of fresh water and salt available.

"Let Thy Food be
Thy Medicine and
Medicine Thy Food".
– *Hippocrates*

Long in the Tooth

In the wild, horses have access to hours of grazing to trim their teeth. Our domestic horses don't have that, so they need dental help. It's essential to have a horse's teeth balanced periodically, especially when their food and conditions are changing. Unfortunately, a problem occurs when these "equine dentists" get too heavy-handed. The industry now has power tools to make it easier for practitioners to float horses' teeth. But power tools also make it easy to get carried away and shave too much off.

Horses' teeth continue to grow, but only about three or four inches throughout their lifetime, and all growth cease at around 12 years old. Some older horses are having severe problems masticating their food because, somewhere along the line, someone has been a bit heavy-handed with the power tools. Too much has been shaved off their teeth.

Imagine if your horse only grew three or four inches of hoof throughout his lifetime, you'd be careful who you let near him with nippers. Similarly, we need to be very careful who we allow in our horses' mouths. When choosing a "dentist" for your horse, make sure the practitioner is well educated, practiced, and comfortable using hand tools.

"My senior thoroughbred has spent the last full month in your Cavallo Trek Slim #4's to give him relief from the ground since he can't hold shoes well on the Summer turnout schedule. This is the first pair of boots I have ever used. Overall, the quality and durability are outstanding. I love the easy-care materials and the thick rubbery sole which seems to give him confidence over changing terrain. The fit is adjustable with wide overlap on the closures. I do wish the Velcro closure was set further to the side of the boot (as there is significant overlap in my particular case, see photo) and the inside soft lining that contacts the heel gave way early from the friction of his running around, so perhaps that could be thicker. I am super happy with this product. My only regret is that I didn't buy two more for the back feet. Thank you for a great product! Highly recommended."

Tamarin Thatsa

"I feel in my heart that caring for this glorious creature is an honor. I joke with my friends that I have worked hard all my life for the privilege to spend regular joyous hours shoveling manure! The non-horsey ones don't get it," Carole Herder.

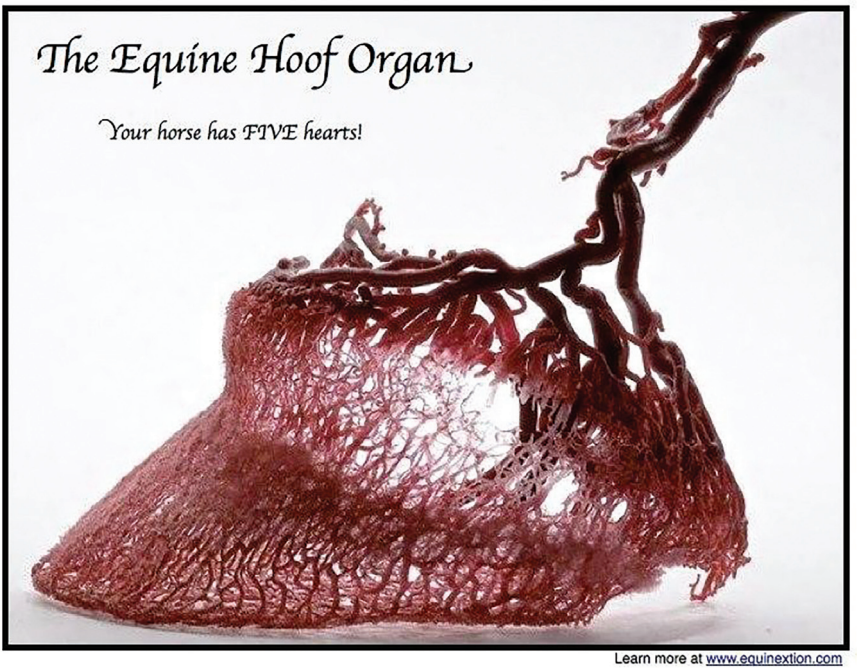
I love Cavallos, I have several pairs for different horses. Where I live, and the ground is very rocky and quite steep. I trail ride at least three times a week and would not be without them, whether at a walk, trot or canter they are great. I also find I get great mileage out of them they last for years - I recommend them to everyone!"

Sharon Tollefson

CHAPTER 12

SOUNDNESS FOR NAVICULAR

Navicular Disease is also referred to as Navicular Syndrome or Caudal Heel Pain. Overly diagnosed and grossly misunderstood; symptoms appear slowly. You will see subtle signs such as pinned ears, swishing tail, overall discomfort, or an inability to pick up the correct lead. Your horse seems uncomfortable, but you can't pinpoint why. He develops a peaked eyelid, becomes unwilling to stand square, trips going downhill, won't pick up his foot for the farrier, or is frequently shifting weight. As horse owners, we have all experienced any number of symptoms. They seem like nuisances, which are easy to dismiss. The truth is, they are warning signs.



Learn more at www.equinextion.com

Unsure how to proceed, we may choose stall rest, increase the exercise program, change the farrier, give him pain killers, anti-inflammatory medication, or alter the feed program. The situation decreases for a time, but if we only address the symptoms, this or another indication appears again later. When we can`t substantiate the reason, we must query the cause. Don't wait until your horse becomes very irritable, aggressive, or has a bout of colic from the stress of discomfort.

The signs can become complicated as one thing affects another. For example, say your horse stops standing squarely. He places his hinds closer to the middle center of gravity, trying to distribute some of the painful front weight onto the hinds. The hind canon bone is no longer on the appropriate weight bearing vertical, and hock joint problems or bone spavin may result. It gets complicated.

Telling the Truth

Our horses do not lie. They do not conspire or contrive to mislead. They don't pretend something is wrong when it's not. If there were any deception, it would be the opposite way. Our prey animal horse would pretend to be a predator, make out like he is okay. He would act healthy, active, in fighting form, and able to quickly flee. So, don't even try to eat him. I have heard people say things like their horse is pretending to be lame, so she doesn't have to work. It is complete nonsense. When our horses appear lame, it is our responsibility to respect and to understand what is wrong. It is our obligation as horse owners, to look at our horses with discerning eyes. In many ways, sore and lame horses are so commonplace that we accept a stilted tender gait as standard – we think that is sound.

To be an astute horseperson, one must develop acumen. We must be able to read the truth in our horses. For example, your horse will tell you long before the obvious development of discoloration and white hairs on his back that the saddle is not fitting. And once any hoof pain has progressed to head-bobbing lameness, your horse has provided several indications of the problem in advance. The most painful hoof can be determined by watching the head rise on that same side, as if away from the pain. Usually, Navicular affects both front feet, but one can be less painful than the other. The heel pain that is often

referred to as Navicular can also be a result of tendinitis, strained ligaments, unobserved injuries, arthritis, inflammation, bursitis and other abnormalities or degenerations. It can be challenging when several things start to occur at once.

Navicular Judgement

Navicular Syndrome is often diagnosed with X-rays showing the deterioration of the coffin bone. Enlarged holes, jagged edges, and passageways through the bone are assumed to be a result of the disease. The holes are not the cause of pain. The porous, rough edges irritate other more sensitive tissue such as the Navicular Bursa and Deep Digital Flexor Tendon. The reason for the holes has other far-reaching implications. A radiograph showing a weakening coffin bone is a symptom, not a cause. Current information is suggesting that the openings in the bone develop because of congested blood clots forcing through the bone spongiosa. Lack of free-flowing blood circulation throughout the hooves causes congestion in the channels above. When the bottle neck finally pushes through into the bone, the clots enlarge the passageways, causing deterioration to bone spongiosa. It is the lack of freely flowing blood circulation that is the real cause of bone corrosion. Pain results additionally, through irritation of connective tissue, stress on ligaments and tendons, and bruising when bone tissue meets corium.

Choosing the Cure

Your choice of treatment is to manage the symptoms or cure the cause. There are several medications for pain, decreased inflammation, and even increased blood circulation. Nerve block injections will provide comfort for a period. Of course,

this treatment has its limits and side effects. Bar shoes and pads can be applied. Be aware that in a standard horseshoe shape, the frog still makes some ground contact and the blood can still circulate somewhat. With metal covering the area, as a Barshoe, circulation is entirely limited. The horse can walk because he cannot feel his feet. His hoof is numb, and the internal damage continues.

"Every horse that wears steel shoes suffers some degree of laminar separation. There are a myriad of other malfunctions that also occur in a shod hoof, and they all contribute to the hoof functioning in a completely different and abnormal fashion and it leads to a severe contraction in their size, so much so that when the shoe is removed the horses can no longer walk comfortably on their own feet.

For the presence of steel on a horse's feet, we are able to observe profound damages that occur due to the stagnation of blood within the hoof and the diminished return of blood back up toward the heart through the veins of the lower leg. Metal shoes interfere with the hoof's natural blood - pumping mechanism. Period.

I will never ask any client of mine to consider shoeing their horse with steel. I have conviction in my belief about this and it is unwavering. I feel that farriers and veterinarians and trainers and horse people must learn the truth about this and tell their clients, friends, and colleagues that shoeing horses damages them and robs them of years of their lives."
– Dr. Tomas Teskey, DVM

DR. TOMAS G. TESKEY, DVM . THE UNFETTERED FOOT A PARADIGM CHANGE FOR EQUINE PODIATRY. EQUINE

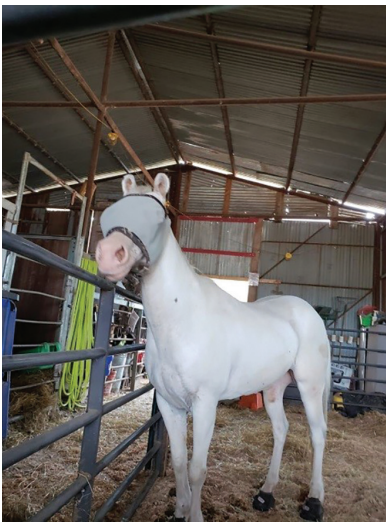
FOOT SCIENCE. 2005(25) PAGE 78.

Give Navicular the Boot

Keeping your horse barefoot can encourage the blood to circulate with ease through the proper channels, carrying a host of nutrients. The hoof can flex and expand to allow shock absorption and relieve the strain to extensor tendons and lateral cartilage. Oxygen and nutrients help increase healthy new bone growth. Optimally functioning hooves will naturally show a decrease in symptoms of discomfort and facilitate in healing the cause. Rehabilitating the hoof to perform its natural function is the only way to cure the condition. The hooves will require proper trimming, hydration, and adequate movement on appropriate terrain. Cavallo Hoof Boots are an integral part of the rehabilitation process, as they provide comfort, protection, and traction. Cavallos have a slightly raised rim to offset the weight of a tender sole, while still maintaining an inner surface functioning as a counter effect for the expansion of the hoof while weight bearing. Cavallos will assist in encouraging blood circulation. In transition, Cavallo Gel pads can be used to stimulate blood flow further. If more cushion is required, you have the option of inserting Comfort Pads. And if your horse is very tender and benefits by wearing boots all-day, every-day you may wish to use Cavallo Pastern Wraps or Sleeves.

Understanding the implications of the personal choice you make in the treatment of any diagnosis is your responsibility as a horse owner. You also can choose to accept or reject a prognosis, seek another opinion, and do your research. The important thing is the quality of life your horse enjoys. Soundness is living a pain free life.

Hello humans!



I just need to say, I love my Cavallo Hoof Boots, and I love you all. It was pretty hard for me to walk for a while. I feel like a new horse now. I've had so much love and attention, life sure is good. Doc came and scratched my ears yesterday. He said my feet show signs of new growth in the right places. I'm trying, since you all aren't giving up on me. It was dark there for a little while last month, I had all but given up. I thought my fate was sealed. I didn't really believe it at first, when that hand touched my face softly and said, "I promise you are forever safe now." Thanks to the right trailer being there at the right time for me. I see a happy future ahead for me now. The humans keep saying, one day I'll have a family of my own, a kid again. Isn't that exciting I'll have my very own kid again! That makes me so happy. I wonder if it'll be a boy or a girl Will I have braided mane and bows with my little princess Will I have a rough & tumble buddy to rope a dummy off of I'll just dream about him or her until I get all better, and my kid finds me. I really love kids you know!

Know what else I love A snack! I could use a little snack. So, while you're standing there, next to that bag of hay replacer, can you possibly send some my way. Someone said that I shouldn't have cookies, although I like cookies, I'll be happy with any snack right now.

With love, Pickles

COMPOSED BY JANICE PALACIOS-ROSS OF 3 AMIGOS EQUINE RESCUE

CHAPTER 13

SOMETHING TO CHEW ON

Having a decent conversation about our horses' feet isn't complete without some consideration of the entire horse. Things like terrain, movement, diet, environment, and socialization are some of the factors that contribute to the shape of your horse's hoofs and overall health. This is what is meant by the term 'holistic,' meaning that we don't separate out influences, but rather, look at everything. One thing affects another.

Dental conformation is not exempt. In fact, mounting evidence suggests that there is a direct relationship between your horse's teeth and feet, (even though it seems they are a long distance from one another). DVM Dr. Tomas Teskey has concluded, after observation of hundreds of horses that pathologies in the mouth are reflected in the hoofs and that something like a club foot will present on the same side of a horse as a problem in the mouth.

It begs the question of what comes first. For the purposes of this article, we will narrow the discussion to some causes and solutions to poor dental health. Of course, from a holistic view, several factors can contribute, not the least of which is the generally accepted treatment. It is believed that since most horses are not afforded their natural inclination to graze their day away and thus balance out their teeth through continual mastication; that we must compensate. We horse owners are encouraged to 'float' our horses' teeth, on at least, an annual basis. It is considered a necessary practice, whether problems

are apparent or not. I personally am all about prevention, so this could be fair treatment, but 'hold your horses'! Before you allow anyone in your horse's mouth, there are a few things you'll need to know.

Firstly, there is very little dental training provided in most Veterinary Schools. Anyone who really wants to learn must take specific training in this area. People can become very knowledgeable and perform this service well, even without being a Vet. But if you have a horse who may need pharmaceutical assistance for pain or sedation, you must use a Vet to administer the drugs. I would much instead, use drugs than have a horse endure something painful, which could result in lifelong trauma, head shyness, or distrust.

Also, you should know that most Vet schools do not teach how to perform good hoof care, and any particular interest in this area requires additional learning. I have seen Vets and Farriers arrive on properties with all kinds of elaborate tools, and the horses in their care remain lame. I caution everyone to be wary when an Equine Dentist wants to put a power tool in the horse's mouth. Damage can always be done in the wrong hands, but more damage can result quicker with a high-powered tool. Making aggressive changes in the horse mouth can result in entire body stiffness, poll and jaw tension, digestion issues, ulcers, and lameness. Sometimes, with dentistry, farriery, and trimming: less is best.

I like the way Doctor Ramey says it with this statement, *"...horse teeth are thought to erupt at a rate of something like 2 – 6 millimeters a year. That's not very much, and, as such, the teeth shouldn't be in danger of changing very fast. Think about that when you're talking to folks that tell you that your horse needs to have his teeth floated twice a year."*

Yes, they are now in a domestic environment, but we don't have to over-compensate. We could, however, endeavor to adapt our horse's local environment to emulate a natural habitat. Things like feeding them in slow feeders scattered around the ground keep them moving and chewing in the required head down position. Understanding that due care be paid if starting young horses with a bit makes the training process run smoother. Teeth continue to erupt until your horse is five years old, so any pain can be compounded with the inappropriate use of bits. This is a delicate time. Make sure you are observing any changes and taking good care of the youngster's teeth. You also have the option of riding bitless, which may significantly contribute to your horse's well-being.

In equine dentistry, and pretty much everything to do with horses, there is conflicting advice. We are all still learning, and since we care about our horse's overall health and well – being, we seek a holistic approach which involves an understanding of our horse's natural way of being. Think of all the new ideas and things we have learned and develop a curious respect for other's opinions and ideas. In this way, we can grow together, understanding that our goals are similar. There is no reason to polarize against power tools or metal shoes or a particular bit or anything else. Fundamentally we all want the same thing - what's best for the horse. And when you are thinking about comfort for your horse's hoofs, please make Cavallo Hoof Boots one of the choices you might consider.

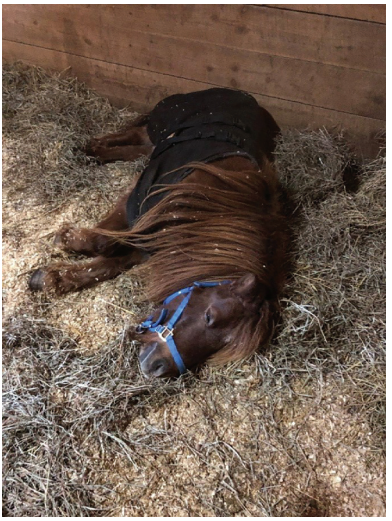
“My handsome (but sensitive) boy saved up his allowance and got some fancy new Cavallo Boots today! First test drive today and he is LOVING them. I see an immediate impact. I’m so glad to have Cavallo Boots to transition this boy properly to a barefoot pony! ”

Tara Venable

CHAPTER 14

LAMINITIS SCHOOL FOR THE FAINT OF HEART

If your horse contracts Laminitis, you have been invited to the school of horse health which is not for the faint of heart. This is a stressful and emotional journey that requires investigation and knowledge to cure. Yes, it is a serious disease and can indeed be fatal. Laminitis can also be cured, never to appear again. An abundance of information exists on the internet, explaining what may initiate an attack. You can simply search to find the extensive listings. You may have left the feed room door open - your horse has gorged on the entire barrel of grain and now has a severe concentration of starchy sugar in his gut. Perhaps your 'easy keeper' has stuffed himself with too much fresh grass. Ponies and minis, especially, may develop Grass Founder, resulting in insulin-resistant problems. Certain medications, wormers, antibiotics, vaccinations, infections, injuries, birthing, and various illnesses can activate a bout of laminitis. Stress can cause it, and concussive forces may enable it as well.



Laminitis is Like Ripping Velcro

Laminitis, simply put, is like a breakdown of interlacing fingers, but the 'fingers' are made of tissue (called lamellae) that attach the bone to the hoof wall. It can be compared to a Velcro attachment which, instead of synthetic material, is made of live tissue. You can imagine that living matter, ripping apart, can be harrowing. When the strength and quality of lamellae fails, these tissues are compromised; the bone

may tear away from the hoof wall. The toe of the coffin bone could even plunge through the sole of the hoof, delivering merciless agony.

There are various signs indicating symptoms of laminitis, such as shifting weight from one foot to another, appearing sore, frequently lying down, bumps in the hoof, irregular appearance, reluctance to move, unwillingness, rocking back and forth, sweating, increased heart rate, and even staggering. If you suspect a problem, you should consult a veterinarian immediately.

Immediate Action Plan

The instant you have a diagnosis of laminitis, you must act to make your horse more comfortable. Provide a soft bed to lie in and if he prefers to stand, place hoofs in Cavallo Boots with padded insoles. Cavallo offers a range of padding depending on the severity. It may be appropriate to provide more cushion at the beginning and then maintain the natural counter-effect of a somewhat harder insole to help stimulate blood flow after more comfort is achieved. You could even tape foam to his feet while you are waiting for your boots to arrive. Ice therapy treatment performed promptly will improve the situation dramatically. Unfortunately, this window of opportunity is only about 48 hours, so you must move quickly.

Make your patient feel well by providing the comfort of relaxed companionship, plenty of fresh water, and hay that has been soaked to remove the sugars. Offer free choice salt and minerals of the highest absorptive quality to increase immunity, hoof health, and the healing process. Above all, if you have identified the cause of the attack, remove it. When appropriate, have your horse tested for hormone levels, particularly insulin, so that you can adapt his diet accordingly.

Microbiome Standing Guard

Everything your horse ingests influences his microbiome. The gut acts as a guard for the immune system, being regularly exposed to new microbes, bugs, germs, and bacteria that come from the food and water. The process begins in the stomach and small intestine with dizzying amounts of bacteria colonizing the upper intestinal tract. This commotion of sugars and starch produce lactate and volatile fatty acids, which are then absorbed by the horse and used for energy or to produce fats or glucose in the liver. This fermentation process reduces the blood sugars and amounts of enzymes required to digest. The cycle results with more microorganisms releasing into the intestinal fluid to help cultivate good bacteria. The same activities continue with even more bacteria in the colon, which then provide some resistance to viruses or bacteria which may be harmful.

Your horse is a hindgut fermenter, which is a good thing because it means the flora of the hindgut can process, for a second time, the massive amounts of fiber he ingests. But this leaves horses vulnerable to failure of digesting large quantities of sugars. Gut bacteria are necessarily and inextricably connected to metabolism, immune function, vitamin and mineral absorption, central nervous system function, and even mental health. The microbiome is at the forefront of progressive studies regarding the full health for both our horses and us.

Support the Entire System

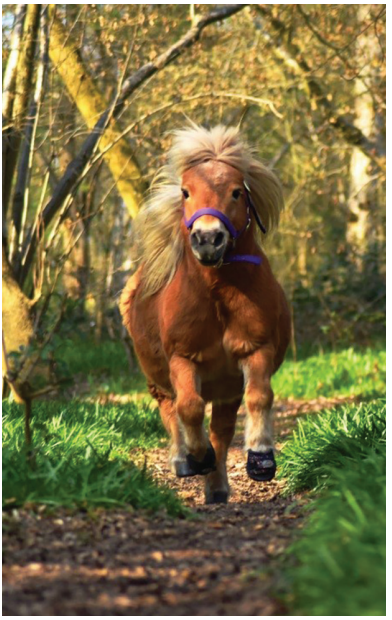
The critical thing to note is that your horse's body is an entire system. It is a field of potentiality, always changing; getting stronger or weaker depending on several factors. Electrons, atoms, and molecules combine to create a chemical, which bonds to share a field of information. This information accumulates to form cells, which then form tissues that work together and organize into organs to develop bodily systems. The cardiovascular system, digestive, immune, biomechanical, nervous, and reproductive systems are the organized matter of your horse's body. These systems do not function in isolation. Here's an example: too much acidic activity (caused by undigested material in the hindgut) annihilates the bacteria that digest fiber. Toxins are released in the gut as this bacterium dies. The poisons enter the bloodstream through the gut wall and interrupt proper blood circulation, which can then cause laminitis in the feet.

Reverse Wedge or Traditional Treatments

We generally treat laminitis as a hoof problem. Some suggest hoof supplements, nerve blocks, bar shoes, frog support, and corrective shoeing such as lowering the heel and then applying wedge pads. It seems counter-intuitive to reduce and then raise the heel, but these

are some of the conventional treatments used. Even if you were going to wedge the hoof in one direction, from the physical, biomechanical perspective, it would not be a back wedge, but rather a toe or reverse wedge, which would lever the coffin bone up at the front and back into the wall. Any wedging should be considered temporary, in compliance with corresponding percentages shown on radiographs and monitored regularly. Some recommend exercise to prevent obesity, while others advocate box stall rest and confinement. Feed restriction is also a prescription, but there are many considerations in treatment. Horses can get uncomfortable when food is not available, and stress levels elevate.

Timing is vital in treatment, and so is a real understanding of the nature of the horse. Misperceived cures and therapy can increase levels of anxiety, thereby aggravating the distressing state of affairs even further. Large doses of vitamin C, turmeric supplements and even whole milk cream added to the feed have been touted as cures. There are many opinions. It can be simple or very complex, and that is the way of many things, including laminitis. Seek help, seek knowledge, and develop an understanding of a horse's nature. Make prevention the most significant asset in your toolkit.

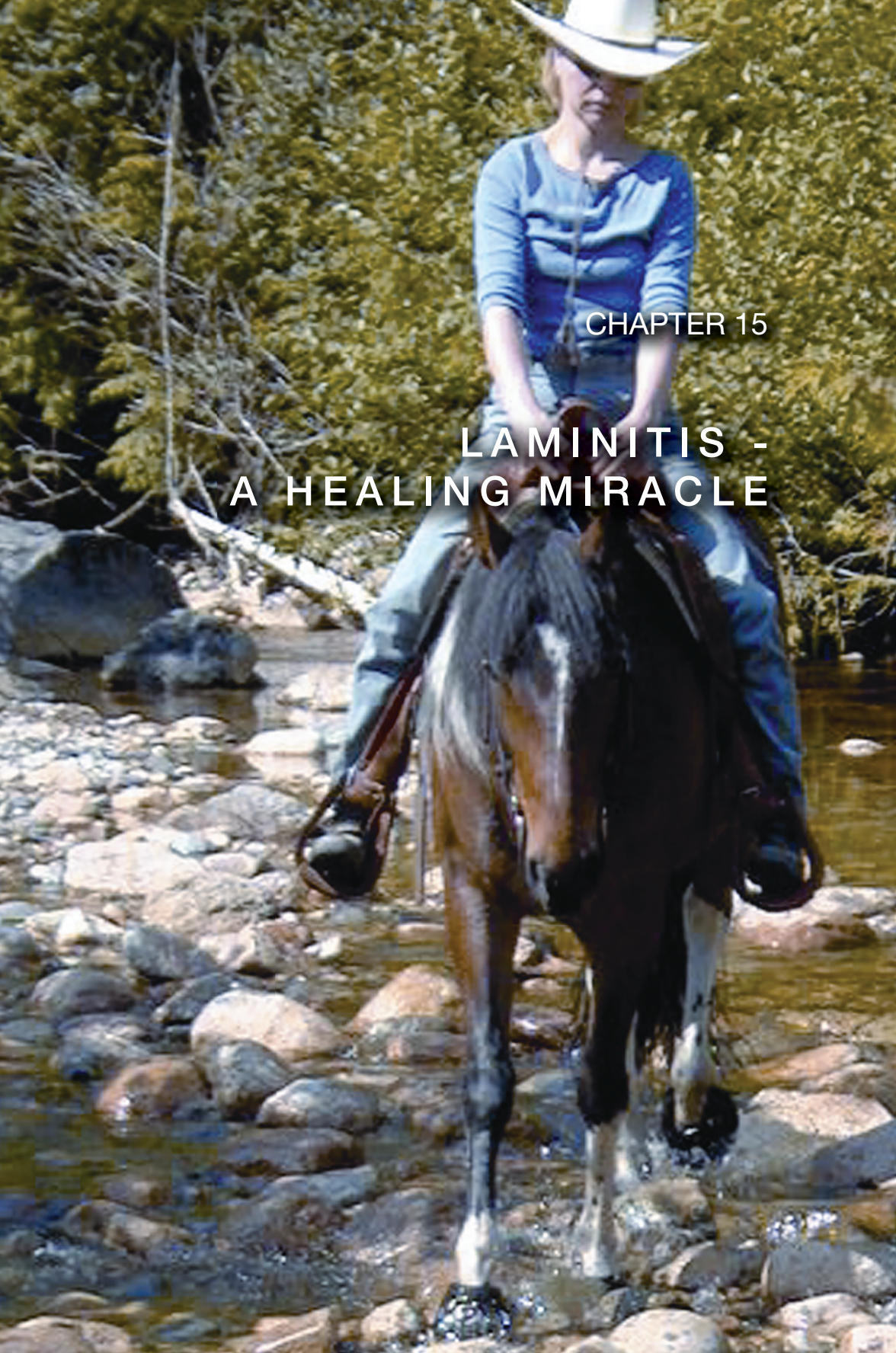


Cavallo Hoof Boots Give a Mini with Laminitis a Chance!

"Jonesy is a 9 ½ year old miniature horse who suffers from laminitis from time to time. Until this year, he had never had it in winter before and had never been laying for hours at a time. Jonesy, at the end of January, could not walk. The weather in Indiana had been going from 50 degrees to 10 degrees in one day. Jonesy was in trouble. I consulted with his vet and we immediately started him on pain medicine. After a few days I was not seeing much progress and was getting concerned that he was not going to recover from this. I contacted Cavallo to see if they had any recommendations that we could possibly try for Jonesy.

We decided to try Cavallo CLB on all 4 feet. We also used the new yellow Comfort Pads in the shoes. Once the boots were on, Jonesy was able to walk. Yes, he was in pain, but they were helping, and he was moving. It has been a long 4 weeks, but I am very happy to report that Jonesy took off running today! Today was the first day he had gone back out into the big pasture and I guess he was just so excited that he had to show me how good he felt. I do believe that the Cavallo CLB helped save his life. I was so afraid he wasn't going to get up again and I was going to have to put him to sleep because he was in so much pain. I am so thankful that Cavallo helped me come up with a solution for Jonesy. Thank You Cavallo!"

– Kristye Lewis



CHAPTER 15

LAMINITIS - A HEALING MIRACLE

As a global Hoof Boot Company, we, at Cavallo, regularly receive hundreds of stories from horse owners around the world. Some are inspiring and uplifting, others are funny or just silly, and still, others will bring us to tears. We particularly love the story of the 15.2hh, 17-year-old Frodo.

Frodo Entertainment

Frodo is quite well known, as there are very few Traditional Gypsy Cobs competing at Prix St. George level. His human companion, Sue Grice, is a British Horse Society Accredited Professional Coach and holder of the UK Coaching Certificate level 3 in dressage. Last year, Sue had three horses concurrently competing barefoot in British Dressage. Their outstanding successes regularly feature in UK Equine events and publications.

In the beginning, everyone thought Frodo was cute and wondered what a hairy cob was doing in the warm-up arena. They quickly grew serious when he broke into a trot. Frodo was lightly agile on his feet. An undeniable avid competitor, Frodo attained honored accolades against any supposed odds!

And then Frodo's challenges exploded in an unexpected direction. He developed laminitis. Frodo became very sick and potentially lame forever.

Fast Track to the Show Ring

Sue was shattered but not deterred. After 6 months of stall rest, and another year of continued symptoms, they discovered Cavallo Hoof boots. Miraculously, Frodo's healing fast-tracked and put him right back in the show ring. Discovering the extraordinary comfort, flexibility, and ease available to him in his Cavallo Boots, Frodo's pain

was forgotten. He remembered what it was like to move. And this boy really wanted to move. In fact, all horses do. It is their nature.

In a natural environment, horses move 10–15 miles a day foraging for food, running with the herd, finding water and naturally stimulating and trimming their hoofs. The proper function of the hoof means that the hoof expands and flexes when bearing weight, to allow the structure of the horse to descend and the hoof capsule to absorb that shock. Healthy hoof function requires that blood circulates freely, providing nutrients to all the live tissues of the hoof. This is accomplished through unrestrained movement, flexion, and the pumping action of a natural bare hoof. We call this "Hoof Mechanism," and it is essential to healing and maintaining healthy hoofs. "No Hoof, No Horse."

Frodo with Laminitis

Frodo after Laminitis

Don't Let the Wake Drive the Boat!

Frodo re-discovered ease and comfort in his Cavallos. It was the invitation he needed to start moving again. Blood circulation, oxygenation, and over-all vitality returned to his body. He kicked up his heels yet again, and bestowed gratitude, joy, and relief to our dear Sue. Her commitment to her horse transcended limiting beliefs and a fatalistic viewpoint. Sue's attitude and support of her horse helped erase the pain Frodo experienced, and even the memory of it. He recovered his persona as Dressage contender! This isn't magic. We can all facilitate healing. It's a matter of our commitment, faith, and purpose. When we commit to a vision of the outcome and refuse to waiver from it, we are taking charge. As mentioned previously, a dear friend says, "Don't let the wake drive the boat," meaning that when a bad thing happens, we move on to put it behind us without letting it pave our future.

Thoughts are Rivers

It is also a matter of what thoughts we allow ourselves to entertain. The more frequently patterns of thought and behavior are practiced – the more ingrained they become. Neural pathways are like rivers that have increasing amounts of water running in them. When the thoughts are frequent and repetitive, they carve paths of greater depth and strength. Then these thoughts become ingrained and hard to change. They gain more volume, current, and flow. The idea is to let those thoughts that don't serve your desired outcome dissipate. Choose and then practice new thoughts and believe in the desired result. Sue Grice held a strong vision for Frodo. She envisaged his success, his vitality, and how he would behave when his health returned. She was committed and did not waver. Great athletes do this. They hold images of winning and entertain these imageries daily. Performers visualize crowds cheering while they perform. Golfers envision placing the ball exactly where they want it. They believe and foresee, and it becomes real. Many horses have been healed of laminitis, founder, white line disease, and navicular when owners stop letting the past dictate the future. I see myself as a leader in the hoof care world. It's about empowerment – creating a future in a bold new way, free of past

practices. Frodo's diagnosis, prognosis and prescription suggested his fatality. Sue was willing to look past conventionality. Sue viewed Frodo as a whole, rather than in parts. She understood that the body of her beloved horse was a complete system.

Prevention is always the first key and can only be practiced with knowledge. Resources are available and, as a horse owner, it is your responsibility to discover them. Sue's story is a perfect example.

Sue sent in these videos documenting Frodo's progress. You'll be very entertained watching these, and you will surely have a giggle:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EGOwOmtr4cQ

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u8cqG_A_Vhk&t=31s

All Sue's horses work barefoot and wear Cavallo hoof boots. They hack out once or twice a week for around 2-3 hours over varied terrain from forest tracks to moorland and beaches. Frodo also wears his Cavallos when turned out in the field when the ground is hard and frosty, and of course, for any injury or laminitic recurrence. Cavallo Hoof Boots helped save Frodo from a terrible fate. Cavallos are the best hoof boots in the world!

“Super happy with our new Cavallo slim Sports. After pulling my mare’s shoes, she was off under saddle. Put these bad boys on her today, and she was like new! Thanks for making a great product.”

Erika Johnson

“This is Daisy. When we got her, her previous owner told us she had foundered after giving birth, and she has had sore feet ever since. We’ve been trying to figure out what would help her, so we bought the Trek boots. Today is her first day wearing them, and we noticed a difference right off the bat!”

Jim Watson, Mississauga Ontario

CHAPTER 16

WHY MY HORSE?

This Hurts!

Why does one horse eat a barrel of grain and colic or develop laminitis, while another does not? It could be just the 'luck of the draw'. It could be because the latter horse's biological systems are not functioning optimally. His immune system is taxed. His microbiome is over-run with toxins and harmful bacteria (or, alternatively, not enough good bacteria). There is evidence that domestic horses have a less diverse community of bacteria in their guts to combat disease. They are not exposed to a varietal host of micro-organisms that can build immunity. A plethora of reasons may instigate and cause this gorging of grain to be the final act that pushes your horse over into dis-ease. He could be experiencing too much stress as a result of his lifestyle. Perhaps he is suffering a lack of contact with a herd, lack of movement, or some other unnatural state in his environment. There is a multitude of causes for health depletion in your horse. The thing is, if your horse's health is compromised, he is susceptible to a bout of Laminitis. One thing we know for sure is that properly trimmed, well-functioning, balanced hoofs go a long way towards prevention and the ability for your horse to combat and overthrow the effects of less-than-optimal conditions.

Imagine Your Fingernail

Imagine the tip of your fingernail being pulled away from your finger. The tissue between your finger and fingernail stretches apart with excruciating pain until the nail separates. You either bleed openly or under the nail itself. This is a painful injury, subject to infection, and requiring immediate attention. Now, if your nail was cropped regularly to be symmetrical and close to your fingertip and if your nail had a strong integral and nutritional composition, it would be difficult to separate it from its structure. Your finger would remain strong and intact even with force being exerted upon it. The digit is a cohesive unit and its' protective layer would not be undermined to weaken the integrity of the whole. The parts would support each other. Perhaps you would feel pressure or discomfort, but your nail would not rip away.

In the case of laminitis, torque to an imbalanced, uncared-for and improperly trimmed hoof can pull the hoof wall away from the hoof capsule to result in founder. Conversely, balanced and correctly trimmed, well-nourished feet will prevent this. Keeping your horse away from an overabundance of internal and external stresses such as chemicals and toxins is imperative to prevention. This goes for conventional treatments like wormers. It is essential not to overburden the system by over-worming or over-vaccinating your horse. Remember, less is very often best. The healthy body's natural tendency is to heal and restore.

There are some fundamental things you must understand for the prevention of disease. Practicing a holistic healing approach requires an understanding of horses in nature. Remember that they are wild animals who live outdoors. Even though we love them like members of our families, they are not our pets. They should not be pampered in ways that are not natural for them. Respect the supremacy of nature and its healing principles. By understanding our animals, we can develop a plan of treatment that is appropriate to the condition. Laminitis is not an illness that must be fixed, but rather a correction and a lifestyle modification that can be adapted for long-term health. For example, contrary to a traditional recommendation for stall confinement, your

horse will more likely thrive with 24/7 turnout. Remember that in a wild herd environment, horses will move at least 10 miles a day on rough terrain. This naturally trims and stimulates their hoofs. Providing adequate movement options is essential for your horse's health and well-being.

Treatment for Laminitis

To start treatment, provide support to the coffin bone and ease for the stretching laminae. The toes may be brought back, even to the inside of the stretched white line. Any flares, stresses, imbalances, or irregularities should be addressed. Again, less is best, because we do not want to compromise support by removing too much sole provision, especially at the toe. Your trimmer should proceed cautiously, trimming a little bit at frequent intervals, allowing rest and convalescence between trims and offering you an understanding of the process. Cavallo Hoof Boots are an absolute must during this process, not only to provide support and protection but to embrace

Cavallo's therapeutic insoles, any potential poultice or cooling treatment and to ultimately help facilitate the comfort and benefit of increased movement.

Hoof hydration may be indicated to help promote suppleness, prevent cracking, and increase the flex required for hoof mechanism. As illness prevention, nature's wisdom provides. For example - outside of a domestic environment where horses are offered water in buckets; they will stand in a river or waterhole when they are thirsty, thus hydrating their hoofs at the same time. When increased hoof hydration is required, simply tape over the drainage holes and fill your Cavallo Hoof Boots with water. This is an excellent procedure to use before trimming also, as it offers your trimmer much softer and more malleable hoofs to work with for precise efficiency.

High-quality vitamins, minerals, and free choice salt should be offered. Make sure plenty of fresh, clean water is available. You may wish to increase Vitamin C intake during this time to help heal and build immunity. There are several good supplements and nutritional building blocks you can deploy with the advice of your veterinarian. You must remain flexible and respond to changes quickly. Also, be willing to

modify the environment. We recommend a harder standing surface to act as a counter-effect, which stimulates hoof mechanism and blood circulation. But, when your horse is very sore, a soft-bedded area is more appropriate for him to recline and rest those aching feet. When rehabilitation is again underway, a more hardened surface can help regain strength. Cavallo offers a variety of insoles (hoof boot pads), which are perfect for this transitioning and required flexibility. To repeat, circulation is imperative to the distribution of nutrients throughout the hoof and your horse's entire system. Healthy blood flow aids in the prevention and facilitates healing. Alternatively, limiting blood flow will lead to degeneration. The idea is to get your horse comfortably moving as quickly as possible. Cavallo Hoof Boots go a long way to facilitate your efforts and help your horse regain his proper footing. Secure, confident, and comfortable, your horse can carry on being a horse with appropriate hoof protection.

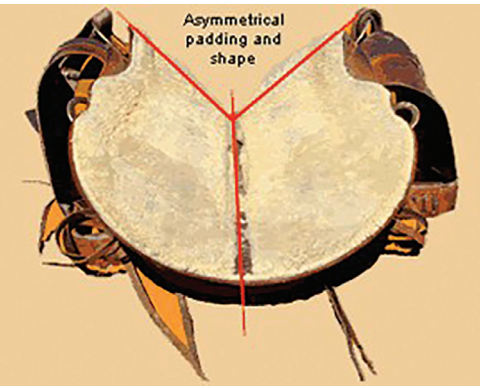
CHAPTER 17

CHECK ANOTHER 'HOT SPOT' WHEN YOUR HORSE SEEMS SORE

When your horse looks "off," pinpointing the root cause can be challenging. Luckily for us, there are not quite as many real problems as the touted solutions available for them. For the smart horse owner, proper horse care involves sifting out reality from dogma. Once you develop a discerning eye and address the two main "hot spots" in your horse's body where issues arise – other areas of soreness become more easily identifiable.

Consider the difference between wild and domestic horses. Most obvious is the treatment of their feet and nailing metal shoes into them. The other is about the saddle we put on to ride them. Let's agree, most saddles are rigid and restrictive, specifically at the scapula or back of the shoulder blade area. Many of them are heavy, particularly western styles. And often, they are too narrow for the horse to really rotate the shoulder fully.

Learn the Warning Signs



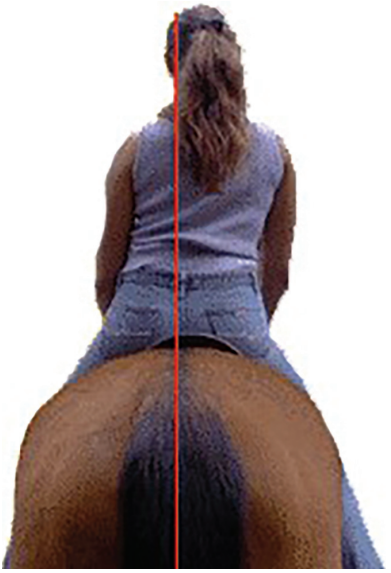
Your horse will tell you long before the obvious development of discoloration and appearance of white hairs on his back that his saddle is not fitting well. His movements will be inflexible and unnatural. When you approach with a saddle, he will pin his ears back. He resists picking up the proper lead. He swishes his tail when he canters. By the time his hairs have turned white around the withers he no longer has pigment in these hair follicles. Circulation to that area has been inhibited for many months. If

you could read the earlier telltale signs, you would remedy the cause of the problem well before symptoms arise.

Horses do not conspire to deceive or mislead us. They don't pretend something is wrong when it's not. It is our responsibility to understand what they are saying, which can be difficult because we are accustomed to seeing a stilted tender gait that it has become our "normal." When you see a horse running with complete freedom of movement, it looks very different to many of the horses we observe under saddle. The perceptive horseperson watches for detail with perception. She knows the difference. She has developed acumen.

Watching Your Back

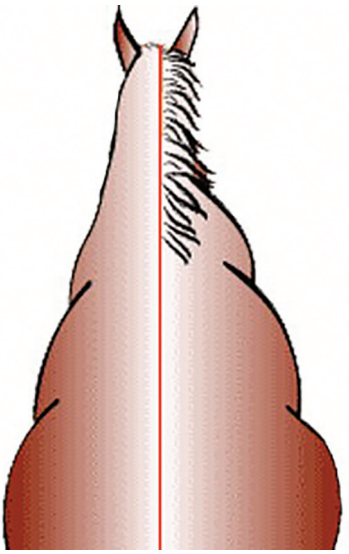
Here are some issues concerning your horse's back and the things you might pay attention to:



- Uneven Saddle Construction
- Like a pair of human shoes, even good saddles may have slightly uneven structure.
- Trees are often asymmetrical.
- Stirrup bars may be placed unevenly.
- Panels may be stuffed inconsistently, displacing the gullet or creating lumps or bumps.
- Wool flocking changes shape over time.

Turn your saddle upside down and place the horn on the ground and just eye-ball down the center. You will see a difference from one side to another.

Asymmetry of the Horse's Body



Horses (like humans!) may develop differently on their left and right sides. For example, a short or long leg may cause uneven musculature in the shoulders or muscle sling supporting the rib cage.

Changes in Musculature

Bodies change and develop. A horse's musculature will change throughout the riding day (as the horse tires) and over the season (as the horse ages, develops, tones or loses muscle mass). These changes affect the way the saddle fits the horse.

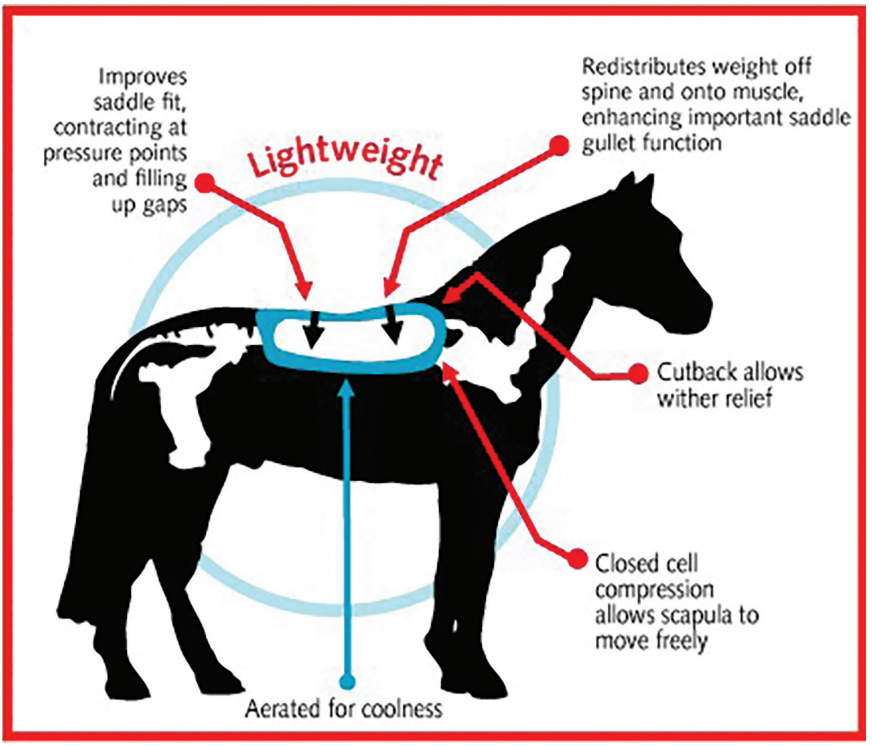
Your Horse's Back May Not Be the Same Next Month!

Saddles as Static Objects

A saddle is a static object, but your horse is a dynamic living creature. Even slight changes in your horse's weight throughout the year have a significant impact on the saddle's fit. And naturally, saddle fit significantly impacts your horse's experience.

That's just common sense, of course. But many riders forget that a horse typically undergoes alterations in weight and posture throughout the seasons and his life. And we continue to put the same old saddles on their backs, year in and year out. That's what saddle pads are for, right? In some cases, yes. But most saddle pads underperform when it comes to a customized and continually changing fit. You need to find the saddle pad that addresses all the changes that come with new seasons, age, injuries, and habits. And at various points, you should have a qualified saddle fitter look at your saddle and evaluate whether

changes are needed. I am not going discuss saddle fit because that is a topic unto itself, and there are professionals available who would do better to come and examine your horse/saddle combination in person. What I have told you is that there are some severe issues with saddles and some things you should paying attention to.



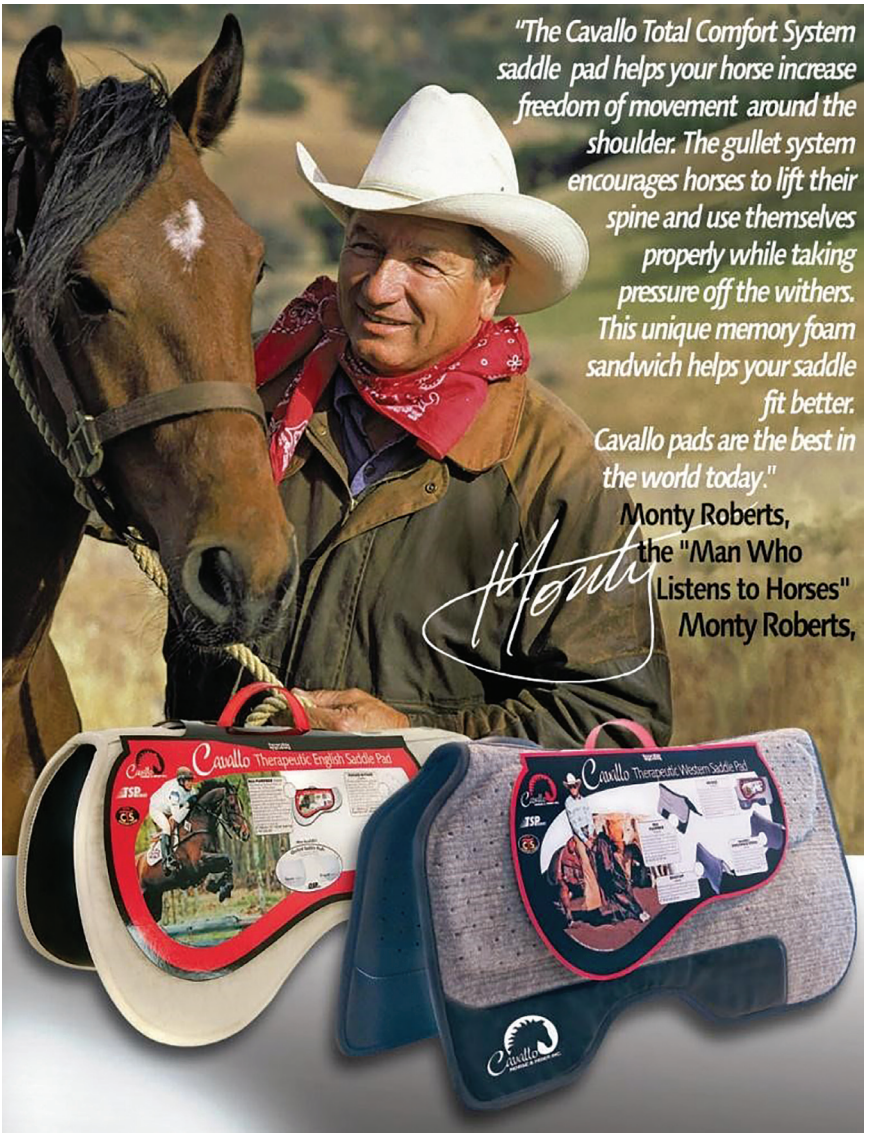
You will find a helpful solution that addresses most of the changes that come with new seasons, age, injuries, and habits in the Total Comfort System Saddle Pads. Specifically engineered to contract and expand where needed and mold for a precise fit. This pad improves comfort between the back and the saddle for each and every ride. They even compensate for your weight and posture.

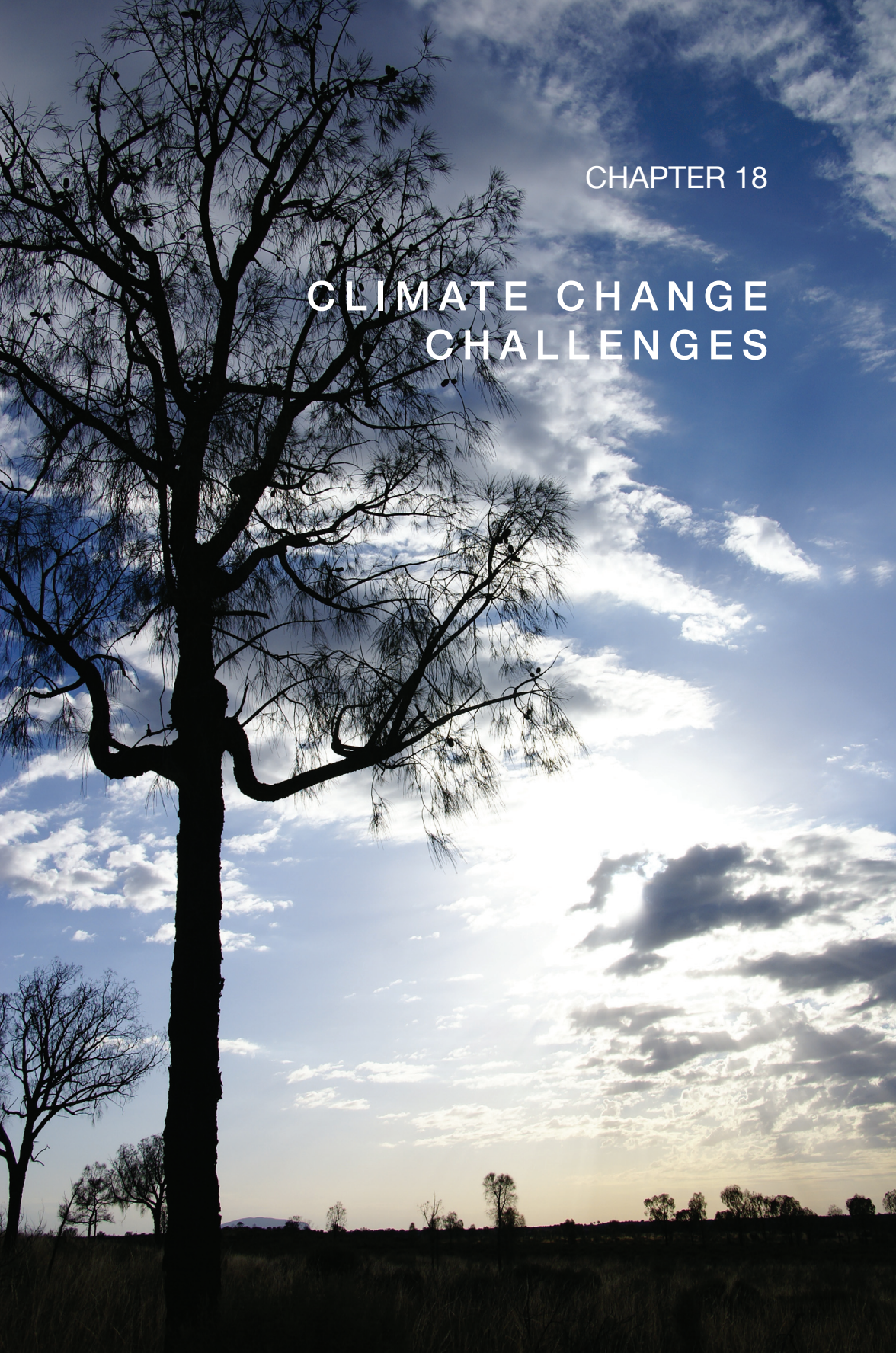
Here's how:

- The combination of 4 technically advanced lightweight materials creates a system that absorbs shock and eases saddle fit discrepancies.
- This Multi-Density Solution results in a thinner pad creating more room for the articulation of the horse's scapula during riding movements.
- Firm poly fiber sheets are inserted alongside the protective memory foam inserts to create internal stability, which serves to equalize the load in high-performance sports. These panels produce an inner equilibrium that even in very active rider movement or saddle stress situations, will allow more complete utilization of the horse's scapula.

We are currently experiencing the most dynamic change in the treatment of horses in history. Twenty years ago, it was a very different climate. People are now looking for alternatives; for ways to improve the life experience of their equine companions through proper saddle fit and hoof care. The proliferation and growing use of products containing glucosamine, MSM, pain killers, and anti-inflammatories is a result of our poor understanding of saddle fit

and hoof function – the 2 hot spots. Allowing our horses a pain-free riding experience includes both appropriate comfort under saddle and naturally functioning healthy hooves.





CHAPTER 18

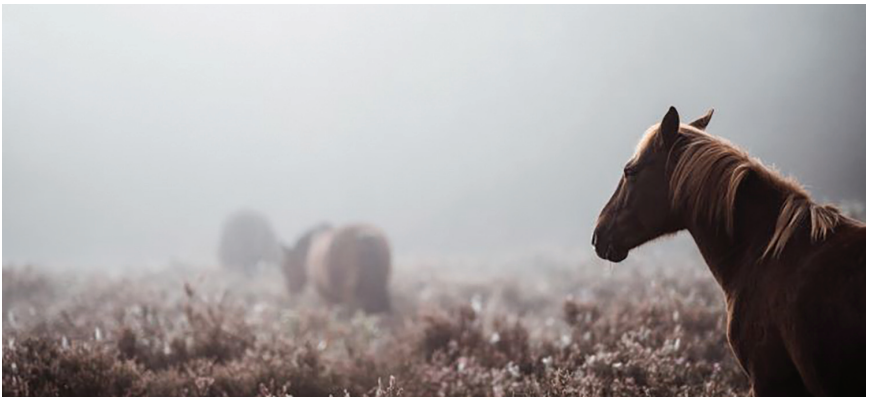
CLIMATE CHANGE CHALLENGES

On June 22, 2019, The Vancouver Sun issued an article warning the city's inhabitants of the imminent danger of smoke inhalation. Our city was building 'respite areas' that will offer clean and fresh air during the summer. This coastal region of British Columbia, where we live, is a temperate rain forest. A rainforest where record-breaking temperatures were soaring, drought threatened, and wildfires burned out of control. To seek relief in the city is one thing, but to be out in the country, where it's happening, is likened to doubling the speed on the clock of your lifeline. Like all living beings, our horses, too, are snared in the relentless net of climate change. Hot summers hail in the smoky fire season. Not only are the pastures, barns, and fences at risk of scorching to the ground, but so are our animals. Respiratory tract and overall health depletion are the minimal results. Fallouts from our topsy-turvy climate change contrast fires and excessive heat with floods and unseasonably cold temperatures.

Looking at my horses in the mix of the lavish summer landscape and amber afternoon sun, I am challenged to pick out the difference between them and the trees. They stand still, inanimate until a tail whoosh accompanies a leg stomp. Then still again - air traveling through nostrils, filling lungs and leaving again, rhythmic fragments of the environment that surrounds them.

"Horses make a landscape
look beautiful." — *Alice Walker*

Wind currents change, and in a blink of an eye they thunder off, snorting and bucking. That natural flush envelopes me, crazy delight when I watch them run. This time tinged with sadness as I am increasingly aware that conditions are not moving in their favor. Their world and ours are becoming more vulnerable every day. Fortunately, there are a few ways to lessen the impact. Prevention and preparation are our friends.



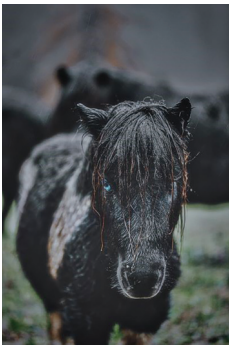
TOO MUCH CHANGE

Extreme, unexpected, and extended weather changes have a significant effect on a horse's physical and emotional health. A drastic change in their environment elevates their levels of stress. Their survival instincts are triggered and, as with any creature, threatened survival is stressful! You can tone it down by keeping the things you can control consistent. Feeding times, immediate living environment, exercise intensity and regimes as well as turn-out schedules provide your horses with something to count on. When tumultuous rains take the place of what should be a warm summer season, the world can seem ominous. Horses take comfort in consistency.

TOO MUCH SUN

Dehydration, water shortage, poor air quality and too much dust are just some of the issues that come with excessive heat. Providing shade is significantly essential. There's not much to be done when the air quality plummets irretrievably. Fire is a force that's hard to reckon with. Most of us couldn't possibly provide HEPA filters and 'respite areas' for our horses. Nature provides trees and foliage which help air quality tremendously. Trees absorb carbon dioxide and other toxins; help cool the environment and emit organic compounds that help form ozone and carbon. Plant some trees while you still can. When seeding your fields, choose drought-tolerate turf and ground cover for grazing. I find comfort when I am doing something to prepare for the other things of which I have no control.

TOO MUCH WATER



The rain won't stop. There are channels of water gushing where they don't belong, and the water troughs are overflowing. If this is your area, you'll need to make sure your horses can get out of the mud and moisture. Excess moisture in the hoofs can lead to a multitude of problems. The hoof starts to act like a sponge. It expands and becomes soft and mushy, prone

to infectious diseases like thrush. I have seen soles deteriorate entirely. You must provide an area for the hooves to dry out. Build some drainage. Standing water is a haven for insects. Apple Cider Vinegar is an excellent natural insecticide and can be used both internally in the feed or water and sprayed externally on the horse or insect breeding ground.

Consult with your trimmer and make her aware of the conditions, so she can monitor hoof changes and make any adjustments. Protect those hoofs and help them maintain their integrity and strength by using your Cavallos either for poultices, elevation from the elements, preserving hoof dressings or keeping hoofs dry. Remember, you can easily block the drainage holes in your Cavallos with duct tape when required.

TOO MUCH HEAT

When allowed to acclimatize, a healthy horse has a natural ability to regulate his body temperature. Problems develop when change happens too rapidly. If overnight, the temperatures soar, his respiration and heart rate may rapidly accelerate. The hair follicles are not conditioned to raise and provide an appropriate layer of insulation. He is sweltering in the heat and needs time to adjust. Keep plenty of fresh water available and give him salt to keep him drinking and electrolytes to restore what he perspires. Fans are perfect machines to help circulate and cool the air. Keep exercise to a minimum. Cut back on the feed and just let him adjust without asking too much of him.

TOO MUCH COLD

Protection and comfort are crucial. Your job is to provide a way to defend against the wind and other extreme effects of plummeting temperatures. The combination of cold, wet, and wind can be deadly. Make sure your horse has the option to seek shelter. Give him more to eat so he can adequately maintain his body temperature while burning up calories. Make sure the water is a drinkable temperature. No - horses do not eat snow. Blanket only when necessary so as

not to compromise their innate ability to raise hair follicles to insulate their bodies. Even a small light element can help your horse make the transition to the cold. If you provide a heater, keep it on low and phase it out as your horse acclimatizes.

Landscape in motion, horses gently moving through the environment like a light breeze, cooling on a hot day. Then, in a flash, they're whipping into their power - forceful beasts that take off at forty miles per hour. Tremendous power. We watch their ebbs and flows as they play their perfect melodies, always in harmony with nature. If you close your eyes just a little and drift, you can almost see the waves of the ocean flowing across their body as their muscles ripple in motion. They charge across the field in a fury with the force of a tsunami, then rest and gaze, still as a serene, glassed pond. This dichotomy of nature's gentle influence is revered in the majesty that is Equus.

"When God wished to create the horse, he said to the South Wind, 'I shall create thee a new being, and I will make him good fortune for my followers, humiliation to my enemies and protection for the obedient.' And the wind said, 'Create!' God condensed the wind and made from it a horse."

— Emir Abd-el-Kader

All beings on the planet are experiencing significant climate change. Rather than be fearful or feel hopeless; take steps to lessen our carbon footprint, and to help our horses adjust to their changing environment. We will keep them healthy, resilient, and comfortable. There is no point in trying to avoid the discomfort of change. It is here now. As horse people, we have the strength and integrity to weather the storms.

“Rocky the Mini uses the original sized boots. Before the new size came out (for minis), we had already bought them in the original M2. They work wonderfully, and we use them for driving and for our therapy visits. We also use them on our other 34” mini, and they fit perfect. Never had any issues.”

Sam Breitling

AFTERWORD

WHO ARE YOU? WHAT DO YOU WANT FOR YOUR HORSE?

I have a deep passion for this industry and the women and men I serve because, at the core, we are all the same in our love for our horses. Our horse has served as our best friend, our solace, our comfort in times of need, an outlet when we need a diversion, our source of joy, and our personal emotional support.

When we are with our horse, other things drift away like feathers on a breeze. We forget the bills, the groceries, the work that never ends, the extra pounds we carry, the too busy lifestyle, the too busy jobs and neglecting partners. Our horse is our partner. We will do everything to ensure the comfort and safety of our horse connection, even if it means missing out on new clothes, a truck payment, or a meal.

We are powerful independent thinkers, and our horse gives us the strength to walk the talk and travel down the less trodden trail. We gravitate to ideas around natural holistic healthcare, for ourselves, our family and our horses. We do not adhere to doctrines just because they have always existed. We question. We seek. We want to know. We need answers. And we are not afraid. We want to do the best we can by our horse. We owe him that for all he does for us.

Keeping our horse barefoot just makes sense. The idea of nailing metal into our best friend's feet has always been questionable. Now that we have a reliable, viable option, we are embracing it. We have researched and done our homework, and we understand that to leave the metal shoeing practice behind, we must find a good trimmer or learn to trim ourselves, exercise our horse and consider things like

terrain and socialization. Above all, if we want to ride our naturally barefoot horse, we must have functional hoof boots that are easy to put on, provide comfort and protection while riding and do not come off while we're out on the trail. We understand the various applications for hoof boots such as protecting our property, protection when horses play together, protection during breeding, as a veterinary aid for injuries or poultices, protection for transportation and as a spare tire for a lost shoe, but our primary purpose for hoof boots is so we can ride horses comfortably through all terrain at any speed.

Cavallo is the very best in the ease of use, the comfort for our horse, and the quality in construction and materials. Hey, and the people with the company are not too bad either.

We are now crusaders of sorts because we are so happy with the path we have chosen; we want to share it with family and friends. We gravitate to people who are like-minded and thoughtful. It was a lonely path at first. We were outcasts in the eyes of some. We let that be because we knew that sooner or later, the penny would drop and people all over the world would begin to understand the new amazing development in hoof care. It's happening now.

If we can help just one friend's horse out of metal shoes, we have served a purpose and aided in the shift towards comfort and freedom for horses. We are proud members of the Cavallo Community striving to make a difference while keeping it Simple - one horse at a time.

"I recently bought a pair of Cavallo boots due to my boy, Kasper Schmeichel, pawing his hooves down to a square. It's safe to say the farrier was not impressed, especially since he has lovely shaped hooves naturally. As a last option I bought your boots not expecting them to work; fly masks, travel boots, etc., you name it and he will escape it! He's so clever it's hard to help him out when he's in a pickle. Three days in and they are still going strong! They've been a miracle item and I'm so impressed. They're so durable and comfortable he doesn't mind them on! Thank you!"

Kristy Hackland

CAVALLO - THE WORLD'S MOST TRUSTED HOOF BOOT

About the Author

Carole Herder is the author of the #1 International Bestseller There Are No Horseshoes in Heaven. Carole has been involved in horse health since 1993. Her company, Cavallo Horse & Rider Inc., develops, manufactures and distributes horse products in 26 countries worldwide. Carole designed and developed Cavallo Hoof Boots and Total Comfort System Saddle Pads. Providing comfort for horses is Carole's passion. She presents trainings around the world on the benefits of keeping horses in their natural state. Ms. Herder is the honoured recipient of the Royal Bank of Canada Woman Entrepreneur of the Year Award. She is a trail blazer and a proud member of the Women's Presidents Organization, supporting female entrepreneurs in every industry.

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CAVALLO – THE OFFICIAL AND APPROVED HOOF BOOTS OF:

Back Country Horsemen of America

Liberated Horsemanship

Professional Association of Therapeutic Horsemanship International

Rocky Mountain Horse Association

Back Country Horsemen of BC

Australian Trail Horse Riders Association

Best of America by Horseback

For more information visit www.cavallo-inc.com - call Toll-Free at:
1-877 818-0037 or email us at info@cavallo-inc.com .
Go to www.cavallo-inc.com/freegift
to download your **FREE TRIMMING MANUAL.**

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Cavallo Buddies, Crusaders & Connections

- Monty Roberts – Equine advocate and intuitive trainer: making the world a better place, CA
- Julie Goodnight – Trainer and clinician: helping horses, one human at a time, CA
- Gregory Sokoloski – Former Houston Police Officer & barefoot groundbreaker, TX
- Okanagan School of Hoof Care – Hoof care visionaries, BC Canada
- Debbie Loucks - Horsemanship Radio host, CA
- Glenn the Geek - Horsemanship Radio – Horsey talk show host, USA
- Rick Lamb, The Horse Show – Equestrian TV show host with the most! USA
- Dutch Henry - Horseman, author & friend, USA
- Joe Camp - Benji films creator, author & friend, USA
- DVM Tomas Teskey - Fellow barefoot advocate & friend, USA
- Dan James and Dan Steers – the unstoppable Double Dan duo! Australia
- Pat Parelli - Every horse's friend, USA
- John Lyons - Horse trainer who keeps the faith, USA
- Tom Seay – The Guru of North America's trails
- Sandi Simons - Teacher of confidence, Australia
- Guy McLean - Horseman, performer AND poet, USA
- Rachel Long - Talented photographer and rescuer of horses, CA
- Connie Challice – Barefoot Trimmer Extraordinaire, BC Canada
- J & M Acres Horse Rescue – Horse rescuers and advocates, BC Canada

- Erin Long, Cairdeas Horsemanship – Scholar, trainer & barefoot horse believer, Denver CO
- Circle F Horse Rescue – Committed equine rescuers, Abbotsford, BC
- Beth Moran, Equine Trail Sports – Tireless equine event organizer

Incredible Journeys in Cavallos

- Heysteri Horses UK – Rescuers and rehabilitators of the UK's luckiest horses
- Grazina Miseviciute, Curito Trip – Free spirited horse whisperer and European wanderer
- Andrea Wady, Taming Wild: Pura Vida – Trainer & Costa-Rica-crosser on horseback
- A Strange Request – Traveling Europe in Cavallos, bottom to top, with minis to drafts
- Sarah Kirk, MS, Merry & Me – Navigating the journey of life with MS, on horseback
- Nomads united Love South Caravan – singing, dancing and riding their way around Central America

Our Team of Cavallo-Booted Stars

- Emma Massingale – At-liberty adventurer, videographer & smile instigator, UK
- Cathy Jo Ayotte & Blue the Horse – Boise State Bronco Girl
- Dynamic Equine Therapy Duo, Rochester MA
- Katy Smith & Digby the Mini – UK's First Guide Horse
- Cheyenne Wimberly – One of America's finest barrel racing ladies!
- Brian Mulvey, Horseman, Father and Hollywood actor, Ireland
- Megan Postletheweight, AMHA World Champion and Cavallo Crusader

- Hannah Pikkat – Queen of Miniature Horses, Australia
- Sue Grice – First dressage superstar to compete with a Gypsy Cob, UK

Organizations that Cavallo calls 'Partners'

- PATH International (Professional Association of Therapeutic Riding) – A selfless volunteer organization, working to improve lives through equine assisted therapy
- Back Country Horsemen of America (BCHA) – A grass roots group who love their horses and love to ride
- American Miniature Horse Association – The epi-centre of miniature horse action!
- Back country horsemen of British Columbia (BCHBC) – Enthusiastic riders and keepers of our trails
- Australia Trail Horse Riders Association – Passionate horse folk Down Unda!
- Horse Council BC – Always there for us, supporting horse people of BC
- American Driving Society
- American Miniature Therapy Horse Association – Spreading smiles wherever they go
- United States Pony Club – Starting point of so many young horse lovers
- Best of America by Horseback – showing off America's stunning and historic trails
- Laurie Harris, We Ride Sport & Trail Magazine – Cutting Edge Equestrian Magazine Builder

Cavallo contributes to these special partnerships by offering periodic promotions and/or donations of product and prizes, as well as exposure to our Cavallo Community by way of social media, newsletter, blogs and articles.

Cavallo-Clad Mounted Units

- Houston Mounted Police – Where Barefoot & Booted is the Law!
- Metro Nashville Mounted Police Unit – Barefoot and Proud
- California Exposition and State Fair Police – Barefoot Law Enforcement/Elvis Impersonation
- Texas A&M Parson's Mounted Cavalry – America's Finest College Mounted Military Unit
- 10th Light Horse Rockingham Troop – Regiment of the Australian Army Reserve

Cavallo Miniature Supermodels

- Patrick the Breyer horse, Hughie & Divinity, USA
- Mercedes the Mini, USA
- Crème Brulee, UK
- Teddy the Shetland, UK
- Rome the Mini, UK
- Crunch & Lippy, Australia
- Kiwi (star of Reggie, a Millennial Depression Comedy), USA
- Geoffrey the Conqueror, UK
- Jasper the friendly Mini, USA

Cavallo-Booted Miniature Horse Therapy Organizations

- Elsie Woodland and Blanka, the Mini Therapy Horse, USA
- Tender Little Hearts Mini Tales, USA
- Lofty Therapy Horses, UK
- Honey's Mini Therapy Adventures, USA
- Adorable Pony Parties – Australia
- TLC Therapy Hooves - USA

- Daisie's Crew - USA
- Happy Hooves – USA
- Mini Hooves of Love – USA
- Soul Harbour Ranch Equine Therapy Program, USA
- Just Say Whoa to Bullying, USA

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Page 31 – Dr Robert Bowker

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Page 32 – Meredith Andrew

Page 35 – Lynn Putland and Merlin

Page 38 – Cavallo archive photo

Page 38 – Lisa Westfall

Page 42 – Catherine LaRose

Page 43 – Cavallo archive photo

Page 44 – Dr Robert Cook

Page 45 – Los Angeles Mounted Posse

Page 46 – Carole Herder, Cavallo archives

Page 47 – Kim VanDrisse

Page 47 – Dusty (Robin Beatty Thompson)

Page 49 – Texas Tech Masked Rider

Page 54 – Cato (Georgina Seal)

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Page 83 – Rachel Long

Page 84 – Janice Palacios-Ross and Pickles of 3 Amigos Equine Rescue

Page 87 – Slash, Cavallo Archives

Page 88 – Mr. Boy (Mary Sims)

Page 90 – Tara Venable

Page 93 – Jonesy (Kristye King Lewis)

Page 97 – Crème Brulee the Shetland (Madeleine Norris)

Page 98 – Jonesy (Kristye King Lewis)

Page 99 – Carole Herder, Cavallo archives

Page 102 –Frodo the Dressage Cob (Sue Grice)

Page 105 – Erika Johnson

Page 106 – Daisy the mule (Jim Watson)

Page 107 – Rachel Long

Page 109 – Cavallo archives

Page 113 – Rachel Long

Page 115 – Rachel Long photo

Page 122 – Monty Roberts

Page 123 – Cavallo Archives

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