



Information Leaflet No. 6

METABOLIC PROBLEMS DUE TO INCORRECT HOOF FORM

The old saying, 'no hoof, no horse,' is about more than lameness and a consequent loss of utility. The horse's hoof is constantly growing, and as such is a waste protein-excreting organ. The proper functioning of this organ is of vital importance to the overall health of the horse.

The corium in the hoof contains a concentration of capillaries comparable to that of the liver and kidneys, with an equivalent amount of metabolic activity. Disruption of circulation in the corium and, as a result, disruption of protein excretion, can have serious consequences for the body's other metabolic organs - skin, liver and kidneys.

The body constantly excretes metabolic protein waste products in the form of hair and horn. If this process is disrupted it causes toxicity and results in overstressing of the metabolic organs.

Reduced circulation in the corium leads to reduced horn production and the protein that should have been excreted as horn is left in the blood stream and must be dealt with by the kidneys and liver. Disruption of liver and kidney functions result in a slow long-term poisoning of the animal, with severe effects upon the heart.

Whilst kidney disease is reckoned by conventional veterinary science to be fairly rare, kidney and urinary tract malfunctions are not, and both liver problems and skin conditions are common.

Blood tests may not tell us a true story of the prevalence of these sorts of problems (especially in the chronic stage). The range of values, which denote a 'healthy state', are derived from a population of horses many of which may not be in optimal health because of shoeing and less than optimal lifestyle. (*See leaflet 7 and 2*)

The metabolism of horses which are denied adequate movement and the company of others is already under constant assault, due to a) inadequate nutrition, b)

constant covering, and c) exposure to a range of toxins in their environment (pesticides, herbicides etc). When the effects of shoeing are added to this list, it is usually only a matter of when, not if, the horse becomes ill in some way.

When the horse is de-shod, consideration must be given to these long-standing metabolic overloads.

Healing requires increased metabolism and circulation, i.e. inflammation. Regeneration of the hoof requires the removal of large amounts of toxins and metabolic waste products that have been accumulating in the foot because of impaired circulation caused by shoeing, contraction etc. The removal of this waste and the healing of damaged tissue in the hoof, which in turn requires increased metabolism and produces increased metabolic waste, as well as the healing of their own damaged tissue, can place quite a strain on the liver and kidneys. In a horse with severely damaged metabolic organs this can be life threatening, which is why Strasser Hoofcare Professionals will take steps to establish the health of liver, kidneys and heart, and to support the healing of these holistically before trimming to restore circulation.



Skin problems around nostrils



2 months later, skin problems are gone

Further Information:

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