Q: Gentian Violet use in Canada.

A: The use of Gentian Violet in all companion animals has been deemed unsafe by Health Canada and the World Health Organization Commission due to the risk of Cancer. Exposure to this product even in small amounts has been found to be high risk. I hold no PHD in the matter, however I strongly believe horse and animals owners should avoid all caustic type products simply because it is not animal or human grade friendly, especially women among children who may be breastfeeding.

Q: Resources towards feeding hoof quality.

A: There are many excellent resources available. I would begin by having a proper assessment done (Vitals, weight, conformation, environment, work load). This can be done with a Veterinarian, a Farrier, a trainer, and yourself! It should be a fun team effort that builds the foundation of what your furry friend needs and has access to. Facebook has an array of online seminars usually held by Professional World Class Trainers that offer excellent information on Sport Horse Nutrition (I know of one approaching April 17th-checkout my FB). Another great avenue is to join a reputable Riding Group such as the Backcountry Horsemen of BC, Horse Council, and local riding groups who usually have experienced horse folk who promote great horse husbandry and have primal knowledge passed down. I myself tend to lean towards Equine Veterinary magazines that host a wide array of studies performed on natural forage and recommended feed on global scales.

Q: Hoof Crack on PowerPoint slide.

A: This is a severe case of crack-neglect that has migrated its way to the coronary band. This may also have been influenced by a severe case of untreated white line disease. Combined with a very upright foot (also could be a case of contracted tendons), the crack developed into a “deep” crack versus superficial.

Q: Hardening the sole.

A: In our experience the hardness of the sole is directly influenced by the weather and climate, ie. moisture content or lack thereof. The best most natural way to help harden the sole is to minimize the amount of moisture that the horse is exposed to. Also, Venous turpentine is a common product used for hardening soles.

Q: Copper Sulphate use and does it affect new tissue growth.

A: Copper sulphate is widely used and unfortunately goes hand in hand with destroying fresh healthy tissue. Its use should be temporary and spread out. Regular friendly Epsom salt soaking and keeping feet dry is your next best defence.

Q: Opinion on Hoof Hardeners, is White line contagious.

A: Hoof hardeners can be helpful in retaining natural hoof moisture and preventing excess exterior moisture from invading. However it is good to keep in mind that a great portion of moisture accesses the foot from the ground surface and through the tubules. Considering white line can contain multiple forms of bacteria, it is hard to say whether white line is truly contagious as one bacteria may be present due to multiple environment variables. I am currently unaware of any cases where the disease has been transferred from one horse to the other.

Q: Reverse shoes vs pads vs bar shoes for Distal Interphalangeal Joint Arthritis.

A: With deterioration of the tip of the coffin bone (pedal osteitis) I would greatly consider shoe protection with a soft pad for comfort. In theory a reverse shoe would be ideal as the primary site of weight bearing is transferred towards the heels and break over is moved back behind the toe, thus allowing ease of motion for the horse and preventing excess strain on the joint. However care must be taken where the horse is walking on hard ground as the toe would be sinking without the surface of the shoe. A bar shoe is typically used to stabilize the hoof capsule and also an option as it is designed to reduce hoof movement and divert the horses weight across a larger platform. Another option would be an omnidirectional shoe which allows the horse to break over in any direction (research Half Round Shoe).

Q: Preventative medicine for winter laminitis if horse is prone.

A: Have your hay tested, feet regularly worked on (especially through winter).

Q: Favourite supplements for hoof health

A: Camelina oil has proven to work among our clientele.

Q: Treating cracks with Thrush Buster at the coronary growth after abscess burst.

A: Thrush busters intended use is for the frog and contains gentian violet (now a recalled product). Betadine and Iodine or another other veterinary disinfectant should be used. Tending to the fresh growth with an aggressive product can kill all healthy growth.

Q: Reoccurring abscessing.

A: Bad luck may be the case considering how diligent you have been, abscesses occur because foreign material invades the sensitive tissue and the body is trying to expel it. Consider the level of moisture around your horses environment and possibly underlying materials. A protective shoe is highly recommended. Regular picking of the feet is great work!

Q: Cellulitis and can it affect the foot in any way

A: Absolutely. This is an extremely painful infection that affects the underlying sensitive and connective tissue in any part of a horses body. The swelling that develops causing an almost vice-like pressure within the tissues and can spread rapidly if left untreated.

Q: Recommended thrush product

A: Apple cider vinegar has proven to be quite effective.

Q: Best hoof conditionner

A: Kevin Bacons is our preferred product.

Q: White line Case Question-Filling up crack.

A: It is advised to have the foot or affected area completely void and clean and dry of any dirty material. A crack should never be filled with product until the area is sufficiently clean.

Q: Crack visible at the heel now gone, what was that?

A: Either a proper trim removed the material or it natural wore off.

Q: Hoof capsule falling off-preventative medicine

A: I have seem a hoof capsule removed in the desert area due to galloping over gopher holes, anything is possible. Proper foot care and nutrition is our foundation.

Q: Copper tox use and how often to apply

A: Heavy duty thrush products should be used with caution due to its harsh chemical content. Refer to your veterinarian for long term use.

Q: Front foot founder-what can we do?

A: Shoes are the best option with pads, a heart bar shoe is also an option.

Q: Recommended sidebone shoe

A: There is a specific shoe called a “Sidebone” shoe. It features a heavy beveled branch on the affected side of the hoof and a thin tapered branch on the non-affected side. This cause the wider branch to stay on top of the ground surface while the opposite branch sinks into the ground surface, thus giving relief to the affected joint with sidebone.

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Little Shuswap Farriers