

Sports Massage Therapy

I am a fully trained Equine Body Worker and can offer Sports Massage Therapy to horses.

Sports Massage Therapy is the application of massage techniques in order to increase health of the horse and rider, performance, endurance, fitness, well-being & prevention / recovery of injury.

Some of the benefits of sports massage include

- Increased range in motion
- Improved stamina
- Improved disposition
- Provides comfort to muscle injuries
- Enhances performance and gait quality
- Improves circulation
- Reduces the tactile defense
- Enables assessment of the physical condition

PLEASE SEE BELOW FOR MORE DETAILS OF THE BENEFITS OF MASSAGE

Massage is used along with conventional and complementary health care as well as proper training techniques enabling the horse to perform at an optimum level. By itself, it does not attempt to cure anything.

By law, Equine Body Workers have to obtain veterinary permission and/or referral before working on a horse.

For more information and to discuss your horses needs, please contact Jeni.

The Benefits Of Massage

Improve stamina

By increasing the range of motion, you'll find the horse is working again in an efficient manner, thus improving the stamina as well as the performance. Anytime the horse is working against himself he is using excessive energy to run his systems.

Improve the disposition

A horse that is not comfortable has to be a saint if he never complains about it. We all know plenty of saints. Other individuals will present their objections by changing their behavior. Often, you'll look back in hindsight realizing that your four legged friend was trying to tell you something well before an injury took place. He wasn't just being a jerk, he was attempting communication. There are "horse whisperers" out there, maybe the equine world needs to employ "people whisperers." Remember when, out of the blue, he started pinning his ears when saddling him up? Could it be possible he was letting you know that he hurt somewhere?

Provide comfort to muscles injuries

There are times you'll be called in on an existing case under veterinarian supervision or as part of the rehabilitation process following an orthopedic type problem or actual muscle injury. After the appropriate time for healing, you find massage, stretching and the proper exercise can help the process along by encouraging the scar tissue to lie down in a better pattern. Reducing any amount of scar tissue as it adheres to healthy tissue can help restore the muscle to better returning function.

Enhance the performance and gait quality

By improving the stamina and the disposition, as well as the range of motion as we talked about above, the performance and gaits also reap the benefits.

Increase the range of motion

A horse that moves better is more efficient in his stride. There is less wear and tear on the joints, ligaments and tendons equating to a longer performance life. Some disciplines rely on a big moving horse, so enhancing the stride improves the gaits. A longer and more efficient stride in a well conditioned sound race horse can make the difference in lengths at the finish line. The dressage horse that is flexible looks better and feels better. A jumper uses a major amount of muscle during his take off, flight and landing. If he is flexible and agile with the muscles synchronized properly, he'll do a better job.

Improve the circulation

You've noticed that stocked up legs will go down after a little exercise or by applying friction. After a massage a horse actually looks like he's been working out in the gym. His veins are easy to see and the coat is glossy. When you've got the circulation going you're also helping to stimulate the elimination of waste products in the system. Exercise is actually the best way to increase the circulation; however, some horses are on a controlled exercise program while recovering from injury or illness. For these horses, massage is used to stimulate the circulation when necessary.

Reduce the tactile defense

Some horses don't want to be touched. They are not used to it and when you put on that surcingle for the first time you'll be looking for an escape route. Others could care less. They love to be touched, scratched, stroked and groomed. The defensive ones need a little time and communication via touch before they get started with any training. I'd say that 90% of the time the ones that are shaking you off just need a deliberate touch program. They

come around fast as long as you've first investigated all the other factors in their environment that may be contributors to the problem.

Assess the physical condition

It's easy to feel tight muscles on a horse especially when it's unilateral. Subtle changes in texture, temperature and tension can be detected with the hands. The horse's response to touch is another part of the equation. By assessing with touch, you'll also get some ideas as to how the training program is progressing (or not.) Often subclinical issues are hard to recognize, but earlier detection can mean permanent damage is lessened.

PLEASE SEE NEXT PAGE FOR THE VETERINARY ACT

The veterinary surgeons act, passed in parliament in 1948 to protect the welfare of sick & injured animals from treatment from unqualified persons. Any massage therapy performed on the animal requires either a referral from the acting veterinary surgeon or consent. All owners and trainers are required to sign an authority to massage document.

After Veterinary permission is obtained the therapist will visit your horse & carry out an initial assessment; this will include a thorough visual & palpative assessment of the animal, seeing them walked & trotted in-hand & in some cases additional work on the lunge or under saddle may be necessary . A full case history will be detailed, followed by the application of the appropriate sports massage techniques for the individual animals needs. Case reports; where appropriate, following therapy programs are sent to the Veterinary Surgeon & Horse Owner / Trainers.

All horses can benefit from an Equine Sports Massage Treatment. This can range from the treasured family pony to top quality competition horses, competing in any sphere. They all can benefit…..Few human athletes would compete without preparing their bodies using massage and stretching exercises. For the supreme athlete ~ The Horse, Equine Sports Massage is essential for their optimal performance, health and general well-being.

THE VETERINARY ACT REFERRALS & CONSENT

As an Equine Sports Massage Therapist it is essential to understand the importance of professionalism & the implications of the Veterinary Act. All work is carried out either following veterinary consent or referral. An equine sports masseur works as part of a multidisciplinary team, imparting, comparing & discussing all information & findings with other members of the team. With the ultimate goal of ensuring optimal care & rehabilitation of the animals in therapy. The fundamentals & implications of the veterinary act are discussed below, together with the structure & function of an Equine Professional Health Team.

“An Equine Masseur Is Part Of An Equine Professional Health Team” Appropriate Members Of An Equine Professional Health Team And Their Input.

The
Veterinary Act And Its Implications.

The Veterinary field of medicine, healthcare and treatment works in an entirely different fashion to that of human medicine, healthcare and treatment. This is a direct result of the parliamentary act passed to protect the welfare of sick and injured animals, The Veterinary Act (1966). The practice of veterinary surgeons in the UK, is governed by The Veterinary Act (1966). Under that act (with certain exemptions, which are noted below) no one may practice veterinary surgery unless registered with The Royal College Of Veterinary Surgeons.

The exemptions to the general rules of The Veterinary Act (1966) are as follows: • Veterinary Act (1966) The Royal College Of Veterinary Surgeons. London. 1) A Doctor or dentist may carry out any treatment, test or operation on an animal, provided he does so at the request of a registered Veterinary Surgeon. 2) A Doctor may also perform an operation on an animal for the purpose of removing an organ or tissue for use in the treatment of a human being. 3) The treatment of an animal by physiotherapy; if carried out under the direction of a registered Veterinary Surgeon who has examined the animal and prescribed such a treatment. 4) An owner of an animal (or his employee, or other members of the owners household) may administer minor medical treatment to his own animal. 5) An owner of an agricultural animal (or anyone engaged or employed in caring for agricultural animals) may carry out any medical treatment or minor surgery (not involving entry into a body cavity) on such an animal provided that this is not done for reward. 6) A veterinary Nurse whose name is entered in the list of Veterinary Nurses maintained by the college may carry out any medical treatment or minor surgery to a companion animal; provided that the companion animal is for the time being, under the care of a registered veterinary Surgeon. 7) Lay persons may administer first aid in an emergency, for the purposes of saving life or relieving pain or suffering.

As a result of The Veterinary Act (1966) and the subsequent exemptions; it is illegal for any person, other than the owner of the animal, to treat an animal unless the permission of the animals Veterinary Surgeon is sought and obtained.

The implications of The Veterinary Act (1966) on the equine world are there to safeguard the welfare of horses. The act provides a framework and protocol for treatment, with a structured hierarchy of professionals working in symbiosis. Thus insuring that a team work in a highly regarded professional capacity.

As a direct result of these implications it is essential that the Equine Masseur should contact the Veterinary Surgeon used by the client and that they gain written permission to massage. The owner should also sign an "Authority To Massage Document". There are many Therapists of varying specialism working outside the parameters of The Veterinary Act (1966) and therefore are breaking the law. These individuals are working in a highly unprofessional capacity, are often not insured or governed by any professional body. However seemingly feel entitled to call themselves "Equine Professionals";

“An Equine masseur Is Part Of An Equine Professional Health Team”

It is essential to highlight the importance of both teamwork and professionalism & the implications of an equine masseur as part of an equine professional health team..

The information that is shared between team members, plays a crucial role in the care, diagnosis, treatment and general state of well being of the animal. Each member of the team will pick up their own information and take their own perception and opinions of the animal to map out any treatment, training, nutritional programme, massage etc. The interlinkage of information gleamed from cases and passed between team members, optimises the ultimate outcome. Presenting a clearer overall picture of a case.