

Acupuncture

What is acupuncture?

Acupuncture is the insertion of very fine needles into precise locations of the body to stimulate nerve endings. This stimulation triggers the up-regulation of pain receptors and the release of hormones which are beneficial to the horse.

What conditions can acupuncture be used to treat?

A huge variety of conditions can benefit from acupuncture. It is vital that a proper investigation and diagnosis has been reached prior to starting acupuncture therapy. It can be successfully used alongside conventional veterinary medicine. It can also help release tight muscles which may be limiting your horse's performance. The following list gives examples of conditions which may benefit from acupuncture but is not exhaustive:

- Muscular pain & lameness
 - ✓ Osteoarthritis
 - ✓ Sacro-iliac disease
 - ✓ Kissing spines
 - ✓ Back pain
 - ✓ Laminitis
 - ✓ Myofascial pain syndrome (performance limiting muscle spasm)
- Respiratory disease, such as RAO (COPD)
- Digestive disease such as diarrhoea and recurrent colic
- Chronic eye conditions
- Reproductive problems including infertility
- Headshaking
- Non healing wounds

Why use acupuncture?

Acupuncture is well tolerated and can be used alone or in conjunction with conventional therapies. It can facilitate healing, pain management and trigger point release. It can be especially useful as an adjunct therapy for competition horses where low grade tightness can affect the performance of the horse but where conventional treatments are restricted due to clean sport regulations.

Will my horse like it?

Most horses really enjoy acupuncture, with many falling asleep during the treatment. Even horses that are traditionally thought of as "needle shy" can enjoy acupuncture. Horses that are hypersensitive to insect bites, such as those suffering from Sweet Itch may be more of a challenge. Occasionally a light sedation is required for especially anxious horses for the first treatment, generally after this they learn to relax and enjoy it.



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[Will my insurance company pay for the treatments?](#)

Yes. Many insurance companies will cover acupuncture under their alternative therapy policy, as long as it is within the claim period for a diagnosed condition, and you have been referred by a vet. If in any doubt, always check with your insurance company.

[How many treatments are required?](#)

Treatment schedules depend on the condition being treated and the individual case. Initially we would usually do 3 treatments 7 days apart and then depending on response, stretch treatment intervals to 4-6 weeks.

[What should you expect and what you need to prepare for an acupuncture treatment](#)

An initial assessment, examination and treatment takes between 45 minutes and an hour, subsequent follow-up treatments may be shorter. A well lit box or tie-up area is required and must be free from all bedding. The horse should be clean and dry.

[By law only qualified veterinary surgeons having undergone further training can perform acupuncture](#)