



Your essential guide to living well

Equine Supplementation for Rescue Rehabilitation

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When we think about horses, we often picture them running wild over open plains or happily grazing on green pastures with their coats glistening in the sunshine. Unfortunately, this is not always the reality for many horses. In recent years, there are a growing number of horses that are no longer wanted or needed, or whose owners are no longer capable of providing care for them, physically or mentally¹¹. These unwanted horses range from being normal, healthy horses of varying ages and breeds, to horses with some type of disability or infirmity, horses that are unattractive, horses that fail to meet their owner's expectations for their intended use (e.g. athletic ability), horses with non-threatening and threatening diseases, horses with behavioral problems or horses that are dangerous¹¹. A relatively small number of these horses end up in a rescue or sanctuary facility where they can be rehabilitated and rehomed. For those horses who end up at a rescue organization, it offers them hope and a bright future.

Many horses have a long road to recovery when they arrive at an equine rescue. Whether they are suffering physically, emotionally or both, their future and quality of life depend on the care they receive.

Malnutrition & Gastro-intestinal Distress

Re-feeding a mal-nourished or starved horse is not an easy process. Many nutritional and biochemical processes are altered when horses go without adequate food for long periods⁵. Poor body condition is apparent in many horses that are relinquished to a rescue organization; their bones are often prominent, the head is typically disproportionately large compared to the body and is low hanging, their tail is



motionless, their eyes are without expression, their coats are dull, their ears barely move to any sounds and they have little to no energy. Re-feeding these individuals without a proper knowledge of the problems they are likely to encounter and without an appropriate feeding program and schedule, will likely result in the death of a significant number of horses⁵. Full return to normal body weight may require three to five months⁵, but can be assisted along with grain and supplements once well on their way to recovery.



Biotic 8™ is used to change the bacterial flora in the large intestine and also to promote good digestion and intestinal health. The 8 different strains of good bacteria ensure a balanced approach to changing the bacterial flora. Each strain of bacteria has been shown to help prevent the growth of bad bacteria whose waste may cause chronic health problems.

Gastra-FX™ & Gastra-FX Ultra™ are used as an aid in the maintenance of normal stomach health by soothing and promoting gut health.

RegenerEQ™ & RegenerEQ Plus™ normalizes the integrity of the gastro-intestinal tract by promoting better appetite and weight gain. Assists in long-lasting gastro-intestinal health for your horses, without limiting the stomach acid production that is so essential for digestion. Recommended for horses that are stressed from travel, competition, new surroundings or new feed.

Respiratory Distress

Domesticating and stabling horses has radically changed their natural environment and can lead to serious health issues. Respiratory infections are reported to be the leading health disease horses suffer with and are considered one of the major issues when they arrive at a rescue sanctuary. Nasal discharge, coughing, fever, depression, lethargy, loss of appetite and change in breathing pattern are all indications of a respiratory irritation. Such respiratory complications are often caused by environmental allergens such as dust, or a mild cold, fungal, bacterial or viral contagion that is inflaming the lungs. Neglecting to take action at the first signs of respiratory distress may become more chronic as the days go on and can have serious and long-lasting effects for the horse. Often when the lungs are undermined at all, the horse's immune system can become compromised.

Respi-Free™ can be used as a first line treatment for breathing problems. This 3 in 1 combination product contains Airwaves (Airway Enhancement Formula), Lung Flush (Lung Support Formula) and Herba Coff (Airway Irritation Formula). Beneficial for horses that compete on synthetic surfaces which contribute to respiratory problems.



Immune Compromised

The equine immune system is extremely complex and is designed to protect a horse from invading pathogens. When everything is functioning in synchrony, the system works well. The problem is that many things can compromise the immune system, and when that happens, the horse is at an increased risk of developing disease. For example, when a horse is stressed, lacking in proper nutrients, or old, the immune system can't function appropriately and pathogens are able to breach the defensive lines⁶. Specifically in rescue horses, you may observe wounds that aren't healing well, ongoing skin issues, respiratory infections, stocking up of the legs, poor recovery from injury, recurrent hoof issues, or an internal parasite load. By slowly providing a high quality diet, reducing stress levels, initiating a vaccination and deworming program, controlling inflammation issues and introducing supplementation, one can have a profound effect on the ability to awaken the equine immune system, thus improving its overall reactivity and even support normal cellular function⁹.



Healthy Horse™ is a 4 in 1 combination product with Hemex (Blood Formula for Maintenance of Normal Red Blood Cell Count), Immune Plus (Immune System Formula), Lung Flush (Lung Support Formula) and Liver Flush (Liver Support Formula).

Parasitic Infestation

One of the problems that will often show up during the initial examination of a new rescue is a heavy parasite infestation. A horse is susceptible to more than 60 internal parasites, and may harbor several species of worms at any time. The



care must be taken to make slow changes in dietary intake, as well as in the approach to hoof care, to allow the body and hooves to heal accordingly⁷. Many rescue horses will exhibit an excessive amount of growth or a severely deformed capsule (usually through chronic laminitis or founder) that significantly affects their movement and comfort. Discretion and experience will dictate the best course of action for the horse, and most professionals will agree that gradual adjustments are necessary to best facilitate healing⁷.



MinerEQ™ is the ultimate source of essential minerals, trace elements, vitamins and antioxidants in one convenient, highly bioavailable form.

AntiFlam™ reduces discomfort and helps with recovery and body aches, especially in the back, joint, legs and feet in both acute and chronic cases. It also helps to strengthen ligaments and joints while supplying sulphur to the body to assist in biochemical reactions.

Adren-FX™ helps in maintaining a healthy blood sugar and balances body hormones.

effects of internal parasites are more evident in young and undernourished horses¹⁰. Common signs of parasitism include weight loss, a dull, rough coat, tail rubbing, poor appetite, decreased stamina, digestive upsets and the characteristic pot belly. Parasites can be a potentially devastating threat to their health, largely because they are kept in confined spaces where the parasite load can build up to dangerous levels. Without intervention, parasite population explosions can result in muscle wasting, anemia, liver damage, ulceration, blockage, rupture and bleeding of the digestive system, recurrent colic, severe weight loss, slow growth in young horses, damaged and irritated lungs, or blood vessel damage by developing worms².

Para-X™ is a chemical-free, gentle, broad-spectrum intestinal cleansing formula that eliminates parasites within the horse's body by creating an uninhabitable host environment.



Untrained & Behavioral Issues

Many variations of horses end up in rescue situations; young, old, untrained, those who have been abused, neglected and demonstrate behavioral problems. All these horses require different approaches to human contact and interactions within a herd. For example, a distrustful and scared horse can be very dangerous and it can take years to resolve behavior issues that are the result of past experience (Rescuing Abused or Neglected Horses-- What You Need to Know). And while it is appealing to believe in the quote 'love conquers all', that love has to involve a firmness, experience, skill and consistency in their handling¹.

Hoof Issues & Metabolic Health

Hoof issues are a crucial concern for anyone rehabilitating a rescue horse. Any equine subjected to domestic abandonment or neglect is usually in some sort of metabolic distress. Great



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Chill™ & Chill Ultra™ are used to calm excitable horses especially horses with jitters by focusing the mind on the task at hand and does not make the horse sleepy or dopey.

Equine rehabilitation is a difficult but rewarding undertaking. Many rescue horses come with specialized care requirements and it is vital that the horses receive individual health care, clean, warm accommodations, and a reliable supply of quality hay, grain and supplements. These are the most expensive aspects of caring for these special horses. Consider supporting your local horse rescue sanctuary by donating, adopting, sponsoring or volunteering your time.

Omega Alpha Pharmaceuticals Inc. is a proud supporter of Whispering Hearts Horse Rescue in Hagersville, Ontario.



Lauren Marlborough has been an avid horsewoman for over 20 years, with several years experience in a variety of roles in the equine trades. She earned a BSc from Lakehead University, a post-graduate Honours Biological Science degree from Brock University, certification as an Equine Sports Massage Therapist, and she obtained the Equine Science Certificate with Distinction from the University of Guelph. Lauren operates her own equine therapy business in Southern Ontario.

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