

■ Laminitis / Insulin Resistance / Equine Metabolic Syndrome

In Review

Laminitis

Laminitis or “founder” is an inflammation of the laminae (blood vessels) that nourish the soft sole of the foot. Most generally affecting the front feet, however, if severe, it may affect all four feet.

Common causes of Laminitis:

- **Insulin Resistance (IR) or Equine Metabolic Syndrome (EMS)** – horses that cannot tolerate high blood sugar from diets rich in carbohydrates
- **Grass founder** – from rich legume pastures (**high sugar content Spring/Fall**)
- **Overweight** and genetically predisposed horses.
- **Retained afterbirth** after foaling
- **Road founder** – long trailer rides
- **Hormonal imbalance** – prolonged heat periods in mares.
- **Black Walnuts**
- **Halter horses** conditioned to increase size/weight
- **Cushings Disease (ECD)**

Anti-Inflammatory, joint, and hoof nutritional support, aid both acute and chronic laminitic activity.

In Review

Insulin Resistance (IR) or Equine Metabolic Syndrome (EMS)

Horses that are overweight and lack exercise may develop **Insulin Resistance (IR)** and have an increased risk of laminitis. Other horses with **IR** may develop **Equine Metabolic Syndrome (EMS)** which includes symptoms such as: **abnormal fat deposits along the neck crest, underline, rump and above the eyes; increased appetite and reduced stamina.**

Some breeds that are “**easy-keepers**” are predisposed genetically with the “**thrifty gene**” and lowered metabolism having evolved from origin in geographic areas with sparse vegetation (i.e., pony breeds, Peruvian Paso Fino, Morgan, Appaloosa and some lines of quarter horses).

Older horses may become IR due to hormonal effects of **Equine Cushings Disease (ECD)**, which is often more common in horses 20 years and older. These horses may have all the symptoms of **EMS**, along with others, such as hirsutism (long curly hair that doesn’t shed in the spring), **excessive sweating, urination and water consumption** as well as **atrophy of muscle mass.**

Magnesium (5,000-6,500 mgs) and chromium (2-4 mgs) daily, provide excellent nutritional support to aid in the reduction of blood glucose in IR, EMS or ECD horses.



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