

"Summer Time Pain"

Every summer it seems that there are some minor health issues that are present in your horse's life. Although with kids being out of school and family vacations, along with it just being too hot to spend much time in the horse barn. We tend to over look one of these small issues that is very painful for your horse. Sun burn is very painful for you to experience. Just think how painful it is for your horse if gone untreated or unprotected from the harsh summer sun. The horse's skin is actually more sensitive than human skin. Combine this sensitivity with constant exposure to the sun and tough summer weather. It is easy to understand how vulnerable your horses are.

Paint horses and Palominos with other light skinned and light hair color breeds of horses seem to experience more sun burning of their skin than other dark colors and breeds. Most of the sun burning takes place on the face around the eyes and the lower muzzle and nose area. I have seen horses with chapped lips that were really sun burnt skin. Think of how uncomfortable the horse is trying to eat hay and rub their nose in the feed tub and touching the hot ground with a burnt flakey nose or face. They are truly helpless and require your love and attention to have any type of first aid and comfort for many-many hot summer days. It is easy and very inexpensive to give a horse comfort and protection from the summer heat. All you have to do as the horse caretaker or horse owner is to spend a small amount of money and a very few minutes of your day to applying some sunscreen and skin care products to your horse.

First now that I have explained the issue, let's start with deciding if your horse is experiencing sun burn. Look for any areas of your horses face and head for dry flakey skin or small blisters. You may notice a certain amount of heat or irritation when you touch sensitive areas of your horse. Do not over look inspecting the entire body surface of your horse that has large amounts of daily sun exposure. If you notice sun irritation or sun burning, apply the same type of skin care products you would use on yourself for the same condition. Keep to the products that lean towards children and have no perfumes or scents. Aloe Vera and other vitamin E based products work well. Continue daily applications of protection until skin heals and looks normal.

If your horse is not at that point of the skin being burnt, yet you want to provide some sort of protection during this time of the year. You can use human sun blocks and other over the counter sun protections. With these products as well, stay with children safe products that are not scented or perfume type lotions or creams. Zinc Oxide is a favorite of many old time horse owners, it does a fine job and is very safe and inexpensive to purchase. Also if you have the facilities or can provide your horses with some sort of shady areas during the heat of the day this obviously is a big plus! If you are unsure of the proper product to use on your horse, contact your local veterinarian for a free telephone consult on this matter. Always try to keep in mind that your horse relies on you for everything 24/7, this means you should try to keep up with your horses daily health concerns.

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