

Lovell Equine Newsletter



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LOVELL EQUINE CLINIC



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LASER THERAPY

The term LASER stands for Light Amplification by Stimulated Emission of Radiation. A laser is any device that produces or amplifies electromagnetic radiation in the wavelength range of 180 nanometers to one millimeter

Laser Therapy can be very beneficial for certain disciplines. Western pleasure horses tend to get sore backed as do some other disciplines. The calming effect of Laser Therapy relaxes them, and used close to a show might actually enhance performance. On the other hand one might not want to use it on race day on a horse that runs long distances.

We have successfully treated fractures, numerous wounds, multiple suspensory and tendon/ligament injuries, many sore joints, primary and secondary back pain, etc. One of the most impressive results was my own mare who had a non-healing open splint bone

fracture of several weeks duration. The wound closed after one treatment and radiographic evidence of healing was quickly apparent. The bone healed completely and without arthritis in her hock even though the fracture was articular. We even treated a donkey with a broken pelvis who had suffered from several fecal impactions, due to pain and inflammation. The laser sales person said she could make that donkey poop and I sarcastically thought, "Sure you can." Several BM's later that day, I bought the laser.

Laser therapy in the Equine is scientifically based, safe, versatile, effective, and the only modality that accelerates the body to heal allowing faster recoveries and a higher quality of life for the patient.

Matthew W. Lovell, DVM

Many different parts and conditions of the horse are treated with the therapy laser:

- Head-Trauma, TMJ joint dysfunction, fractures, pharyngeal lymphoid hyperplasia, guttural pouch disorders.
- Neck-Myositis, trauma, wobblers, jugular vein infections, arthritis, jugular thrombosis (blockage).
- Shoulder-Arthritis, trauma, OCD, tendonitis/bursitis, bicipital tenosynovitis.
- Knee-Trauma, fracture, arthritis, carpal tunnel syndrome.
- Metacarpus (cannon bone area)-Bucked shins, saucer fractures, suspensory and flexor tendon conditions (bowed tendons, etc.), check ligaments injuries.
- Fetlocks-Fractures, sesamoiditis, osselets, OCD, arthritis, trauma.
- Hoof-The hoof capsule itself inhibits the penetration into some areas but many can be reached through the coronary band and heel. These include portions of the soft tissue structures in the foot, portions of the navicular bursa and heel.
 - Acute or chronic laminitis.
 - Navicular syndrome.
 - Coronary band injuries.
 - Lower joint arthritis.
- Back-Primary or secondary back pain, myositis, tying up, arthritis, poor saddle fit issues.
- Hip-Myositis, trochanteric bursitis, fibrotic myopathy, almost always need to do the back (secondary pain) in addition to the hip.
- Stifle-OCD, arthritis, upward fixation, trauma, fractures, soft tissue injuries.
- Hock-Cunean tendonitis/bursitis, curbs, bone spavin, capped hocks, OCD, arthritis of upper hock as well as lower.

Beneficial effects of laser therapy on tissues and cells:

- Anti-Inflammatory.
- Drains Swollen areas.
- Anti-Pain (Analgesic).
- Accelerated Tissue Repair and Cell Growth.
- Improved Vascular Activity.
- Increased Metabolic Activity.
- Treats Trigger Points and Acupuncture Points.
- Reduces Fibrous Tissue Formation.
- Improved Nerve Function.
- Immunoregulation.
- Faster Wound Healing.

Why Laser Therapy is A Better Choice Than Other Treatment Options:

- Laser Therapy does not numb areas for prolonged periods like some other treatment modalities (i.e. shock wave).
- Laser Therapy helps control pain by treating the inflammation that causes it as well as its stimulation of naturally beneficial pain controlling substances.
- There are very few contraindications for Laser Therapy.
- The cost of Laser Therapy is relatively inexpensive.
- Sedation is usually not necessary.
- Effects are often immediate.
- The fact that repeat visits are sometimes necessary allows one to monitor healing or pain relief closely.

Some areas we avoid using laser are:

- NEAR THE EYES
- Abdomen or lower back of pregnant mares
- Growth plates of young animals
- Testicles of stallions
- Dark skinned horses on photosensitive medications
- Over suspected tumors (i.e. sarcoids or melanomas)
- Actively bleeding areas