Mind matters:
Recognizing and Treating Equine BURNOUT

EQUINE POSTURE:
Where Does YOUR Horse Stand?

KEEPI T SIMPLE...
WITH NATURALLY SOURCED SUPPLEMENTS!

The Horse World's
Final frontier
Thoughts from Chris Lombard
In the wake of the recent pet food recall, we’re more aware than ever that cheap feed ingredients are being imported from other countries and not inspected at our ports. Have you considered that the rice bran/protein that found its way into the small pet food market may also be finding its way into the “bag feed” market for horses?

More animal guardians are becoming conscious of the artificial and chemical additives not only in our own diets but in those of our animals—from colorants and preservatives to synthetic vitamin complexes and highly processed oils. Many are seeking natural ways to provide their horses with vitamins, minerals, and essential fatty acids.

You can do the same. Start by educating yourself on the nutritional needs of your horse, individualized to the region you live in, and then provide natural sources. Here are just a few of nature’s gifts:

- **Dandelions** come to life in the early spring and are a great liver cleanser and tonic herb. This medicinal plant has been used through history for human conditions such as liver or kidney disorders, including jaundice. It is rich in potassium, magnesium, calcium, choline, iron, silica, sulfur, and vitamins A, B, C, and D. Dandelions actually contain more vitamin A than carrots! When using the dried herb form, provide about two heaping teaspoons per day for a week or two at a time. Use no more than a rounded tablespoonful and for no longer than fourteen consecutive days. You can also feed your horse small handfuls of fresh dandelions while they’re in season.

- **Rose hips** are one of the richest sources of vitamin C and also contain vitamin A in beta carotene form. They offer thiamine, niacin, riboflavin, and vitamin K as well. Rose hips help horses fight off infections. They also encourage hoof growth, thanks to their biotin content coupled with flavonoids, zinc, and copper. For yearlings, use either the powder at the rate of one tablespoon per day or cut and sifted rose hips at two tablespoons per day. For mature horses, give two tablespoons of rose hip powder or a handful of cut and sifted or whole rose hips.
Flax seed contains essential fatty acids, which are essential for hormone production and the absorption of vitamins A, D, E, and K. EFAs are also components of very important regulatory substances called prostaglandins, which are responsible for transporting oxygen to the tissues, controlling inflammation, synthesizing hormones, and maintaining cellular tissues. They have been found to help produce anti-inflammatory substances in the body that are necessary for proper immune function, collagen formation, and the prevention of some arthritic conditions. Some studies have shown EFAs will enhance the integrity of joint and connective tissues as well as bone density. Provide ¼ to ½ cup ground flax per day.

Kelp is the original source of iodine and comes from the “brown algae” family of plants. It has been used for the natural treatment of under-active thyroid in both horses and humans. A teaspoon offered four or five times a week is sufficient. Some people offer it free-choice.

Garlic, a source of sulfur, is not something most North American horses would come into contact with in the wild, as it was originally native to central Asia. Garlic has been shown to have some anti-parasitic properties against the roundworm *Ascaris lumbricoides*, the most common type of intestinal parasite.

Apple cider vinegar is a natural source of potassium and also contains other minerals. Feed at the rate of ¼ cup per day. Be sure to read the label as some of the apple cider vinegar being sold is “flavored” only, and is not the real thing. It doesn’t work the same!
Dolomite is a mineral made up of approximately 60% calcium carbonate (equivalent to 24% calcium) and 40% magnesium carbonate (equivalent to 12% magnesium)—the proper 2:1 ratio. Also known as magnesium limestone, it contains many naturally occurring trace minerals that are easily absorbed by horses. Use only feed-grade-quality dolomite with calcium levels above 60% and magnesium around 35% or higher. Add one to two tablespoons daily to feed. Dolomite mined from the Nevada area is lower in lead than sources derived from the east.

Bentonite clay, also referred to as montmorillonite clay, is known as one of the most powerful healing clays for treating both internal and external disorders in humans and animals. Studies show that this “volcanic ash clay” was used centuries ago by some of the early Indians of the Andes Mountains, tribes in central Africa, and the Australian Aborigines.

Bentonite clay’s unique structure helps it attract and soak up poisons and toxins on its exterior wall. It then slowly draws them into the interior of the clay where they are held until safely passed through the intestinal track.

Along with its cleansing properties and its ability to remove toxins from the horse’s gut, bentonite also contains calcium and many naturally occurring micro and trace minerals. Feed one tablespoon mixed in the supplements with water a couple times per week.

Sea or natural salt, sodium chloride, is essential for the nutritional and physiological processes of all animals, including horses. It plays a big part in helping the horse’s body digest foods and transmit nerve impulses that contract the muscles. Sodium is as essential to life as the air we breathe and the water we drink. In order for the cells of the body to function normally, a salt/water balance must be maintained, especially during hot weather.

You can purchase naturally dehydrated sea salt with no additives from health food stores. Offer it free-choice and feed at the rate of at least one tablespoon per day in supplement feed, especially in hot weather when horses drink more water.

There are many natural ingredients you can supplement your horse with. You just have to do your research, know what is lacking in your area (both in the soil and water), and/or have your hay tested so you know what to supplement. Adding herbs, free-fed trace mineral salts, or some of the above ingredients will help meet your horse’s daily nutritional needs. It all comes down to balance and a less-is-more approach!

About the author:
Jessica Lynn regularly contributes articles for various national and international horse publications. She is the owner of Earth Song Ranch, an Equine Nutritionist, and a feed and supplement manufacturer based in southern California. Her products include Equine-Zyme™ and Equine-Zyme Plus™, each immune-enhancing with probiotics and herbal blends; she is a distributor for HorseTech® & Smooth Run™ Equine Products. Jessica has been involved in alternative health care, herbs, homeopathy, alternative health, and nutrition for almost 40 years, as well as bare foot hoof care for over 10 years.

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Hint
Quality bentonite clay should be a gray/cream color. It should have a very fine, velveteen feel and be odorless and non-staining.

Pumpkin seeds, dolomite, and garlic powder.

Seeking supplements
When horses are lacking something in their diets, they will, if given the opportunity, seek it out in their “natural” environment. They may eat dirt, clay, or manure in order to try to replenish what they need. Wild horses have been observed eating natural clays by stream beds and even soil if they need minerals. Stalled horses will eat manure if they need the enzymes that would normally come from tree bark, branches, and leaves.