

## **FAQ's**

### **How do I know if my horse has a sore back?**

Common indications that your horse may have a sore back include resentment or sensitivity when grooming or tacking up, subdued/depressed outlook, loss of performance, dipping (cold backed) when mounted, reluctance to work in an outline or to go forward, change in behaviour (bolting, bucking and rearing).

With any back problem, no matter what the underlying cause, there will be a lot of guarding or spasming of the muscles around the affected area. This restricts the mobility of the spine and can be uncomfortable. Manipulations, massage and other forms of physiotherapy will help reduce this spasming and allow the muscles to relax and return to normal function. If the underlying problem is not resolved the problem will more likely return. It has to be clear through diagnosis that we are considering problems that can be resolved. Where there is any indication of spinal damage clinical evaluation by your vet will be needed.

### **Can you manipulate a horse's vertebrae back into position?**

It is a common misconception that horse's bones go out of position, the vertebrae in a horse's back are held so tightly together by their interlocking construction and the soft tissues surrounding the joint that they cannot go out of position. However, after injury to the soft tissue muscles can go into protective spasm and this can cause the joints to become "jammed up" or restricted in their range of movement. Once muscle spasm is removed the joints can be manipulated to regain full function or range of movement.

### **How can I prevent my horse getting a soft tissue injury?**

It is important to ensure your horse is adequately warmed up and down before and after exercise incorporating suitable suppling exercises in the program and is fit enough of the work expected. We recommend that all horses have at least a couple of physiotherapy assessments a year; this may prevent problems occurring before they become chronic in nature.

### **Where are animals treated?**

Both horses and dogs are treated in their own home at a mutually convenient time and day. I like to go to my patients as it generally far less stressful for both the animal and the owner. It is also more effective to work with the owner in developing an appropriate rehabilitation programme for their animal in the environment in which it will ultimately take place.

### **How often should my animal be seen?**

This depends on the problem and how quickly physiotherapy can begin following the onset of a condition. A horse with a mild muscle spasm in their back may only need to be seen once or twice whilst a dog with hip dysplasia may benefit from an ongoing maintenance programme and/or hydrotherapy.

### **What is the cost of treatment?**

Fees vary according to location of treatment and length of session needed. Contact me for a free quote.

### **Is Veterinary Physiotherapy covered by my Insurance?**

Many insurance companies provide cover for physiotherapy. They will require you to obtain a veterinary referral prior to the commencement of treatment. Contact your health insurance company prior to commencing treatment to confirm what benefit is available to your animal as policies vary.