

By Amy Snow & Nancy Zidonis

SUPPORT YOUR HORSE'S EYE HEALTH WITH ACUPRESSURE

A horse's vision is paramount to her sense of security. Here's how regular acupressure sessions to enhance liver function can also support her eye health.

As a prey animal, the horse's survival and sense of security is highly dependent on the acuity of her vision. A horse's vision is capable of detecting peripheral movement in low light due to the lateral position of the eyes, the large size of the eyes, and the elongated shape of the pupils. Evolution does not make mistakes. The horse would not have survived the ages without being able to see while grazing, resting, and being alert to any movement from early dawn to late dusk. The position of a horse's eyes allows her to see where it counts for her protection and survival.

EYE INJURIES AND DISEASE

Unfortunately, equine eye injuries and diseases are only too common. Certain objects in the horse's environment (tree branches, hooks on stable walls, dust, excessive sun, ill-fitting fly masks, etc.) can lead to eye injuries such as corneal laceration. Uveitis, corneal ulcers, glaucoma, cataracts, squamous cell carcinoma, and neurological

impairment are some of the ocular diseases horses can experience. Physical signs of eye issues are redness, squinting, tearing, discoloration, cloudiness, and head shaking. Changes in behavior and performance can also indicate eye problems. If your horse begins to spook or shy more frequently, is reluctant to move, becomes clumsy, or possibly hurts herself more often, it may indicate vision problems.

IMMEDIATE VETERINARY INTERVENTION

All eye injuries and diseases are serious and require immediate veterinary attention. When you observe any physical changes in your horse's eyes, or any performance or behavior changes that indicate difficulty seeing, contact your holistic veterinarian and follow any recommendations.

TRADITIONAL CHINESE MEDICINE

Eye health and visual acuity are associated with Liver function in

Chinese medicine. When eye disease or vision issues are present, we turn to supporting the harmonious flow of energy, blood, and other vital substances to the Liver to restore or maintain eye health. The relationship between Liver function and eye problems can be readily seen when a horse or human is jaundiced, and the white of the eye (sclera) appears yellow.

An acupressure session to enhance the horse's Liver function will, in turn, promote her ability to heal from eye surgery or injury, and reinforce veterinary care being given for ocular disease. The acupressure points presented in the accompanying chart are specifically selected to balance the Liver, and can also be used to generally support your horse's vision, and avoid eye issues.

Amy Snow and Nancy Zidonis are the authors of *ACU-HORSE: A Guide to Equine Acupressure*, *ACU-DOG: A Guide to Canine Acupressure* and *ACU-CAT: A Guide to Feline Acupressure*. They founded Tallgrass Animal Acupressure Resources offering books, manuals, DVDs, apps, meridian charts. Contact: 303-681-3030, animalacupressure.com, tallgrass@animalacupressure.com



ACUPOINTS FOR SUPPORTING EYE HEALTH

- LI 4** — Found below the head of the medial splint bone
- GB 1** — Found at the lateral canthus of the eye
- Liv 2** — Found on the medial aspect of the hind leg below the fetlock joint
- Liv 3** — Found on the medial aspect of the cannon bone at the level of the medial splint bone