

Stain Less

By: Ruthann Smith

The tragedy is that most whitening products and programs actually make coats get dirtier. They dry out the hair so it grabs onto everything. Some even seal the stains onto the hair. Moreover, groomers agree: their hands hurt. Blue shampoo makes hands ache. The jar of soap that has been around forever actually makes the skin peel off groomers' hands and horses' legs. This is no secret. And, it can't be good news for you, your horse or the environment.

Fortunately, the greenest program is also the most effective. Doesn't that make more sense? Healthy hair is easiest to clean, holds rich color, grows gorgeous tails, resists irritation and gleams. And, it is easiest to take good care of!

Braiding 12,000+ horses, I had some time to think about hair- and how to finally solve pervasive problems. Stains are a big one.

If you follow my program, perhaps during wee hours, instead of assessing spots, you'll snicker to think of horses snoring together overnight. There will be none of that scrubbing in the dark. No cold hoses. You might just brush stains off- if there even are any. So, I hope you'll try this:

To reduce stains avoid:

- ◆ Conventional whitening, jarred and medicated shampoos- they dry out the coat so hair is dull, cannot grow and breaks.
- ◆ Sodium Chloride (salt!). Standard to create lather. salt strips oils. It leaves coats parched. Dry skin is readily irritated, does not heal well or sport healthy hair. So, check ingredients. If there is no ingredient list and it is not an equine enzyme: beware.

- Most products are not healthy for the horses nor earth. Especially, commonplace brands.
- ◆ Petroleum products. Silicone and mineral oil coat the hair, making it is slippery and brittle. Plus, they are toxic.
 - ◆ Most stain removers. They leave a yellow shadow and dull brittle hair. However, a quality enzyme can dissolve tough old stains without damaging the coat. Very old yellow areas initially need to stay damp with the enzyme to separate the stain from the hair.
 - ◆ Detanglers. Petroleum products lock dirt in and moisture out.

Use only Shampoo that:

- ◆ Is saturated with Aloe Vera. It conditions coats, volumizes tails and reduces tangles.
- ◆ Has generous amounts of Vitamin E.
- ◆ Uses only medical-grade natural antiseptic Tea Tree Oil. Other grades are harsh.
- ◆ Is pH balanced for horses. It'll rinse easily without leaving a film.

Be sure to:

- ◆ Use an all-in-one shampoo as outlined above + NO detangler- they are toxic and drying. *You won't need a detangler if you use Lucky Braids Shampoo and comb the wet tail. Maintain daily and use Lucky Braids spray enzyme to wipe off dirt.*
- ◆ Avert heel scratches by being sure legs are always bone-dry before entering a stall.
- ◆ Curry lots! Sweat salt dries out coats and attracts dirt. Groom vigorously before and after riding. Brush using your back to bring out natural oils to protect and gleam.

There is nothing like Top Turnout!

So, groom wisely for gleaming stain-free coats.



Jan Hilly, Stone Organics

Proven for the most gorgeous tails:

- * **Shampoo** with Lucky Braids.
- * **Comb** tail when wet. Always twist the length, hold and start at the bottom to protect roots.
- * **Maintain** daily: pick, comb or brush.
- * **Spray** dirt with Lucky Braids enzymatic dry wash. Let tough stains sit damp to dissolve.
- * **Wipe** clean with towel and comb up tail.
- * **Enjoy** the fullest tails and easy care.

The lack of healthy and effective products inspired Ruthann Smith, world-class groom and braider to work with a naturopathic vet to develop the economical Lucky Braids™ grooming products: All-In-One Shampoo, enzymatic Whiteners/ Dry Wash spray, Handy Salve and braiding products. prized by top horsemen. For more grooming tips, please join at: LuckyBraids.com

