EDSS
Styrofoam Support Block System
Instruction Booklet

The information contained in this booklet is intended to be used as a supplement to the Styrofoam Support Block System video. It will highlight the important aspects of the support block applications procedure covered in the video and will be helpful to have on hand when you are applying the support blocks.

Immediate comfort is usually seen when EDSS Support Blocks are applied right away when laminitis is first suspected or if it has been formally diagnosed. Proper medical treatment, along with the second support block application, will ensure the most optimal protection and provide the best natural means for circulation that can be offered to those horses afflicted with acute laminitis.

The EDSS Support Blocks are also very effective to relieve the discomforts of acute hoof pain associated with stone bruises and other hoof problems.

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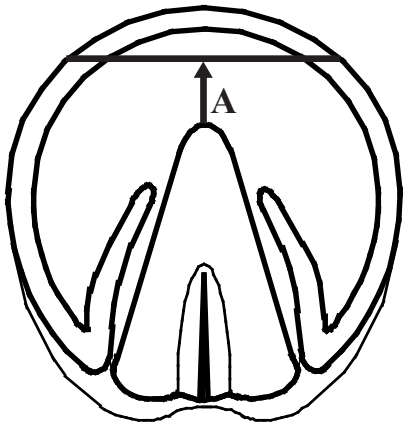
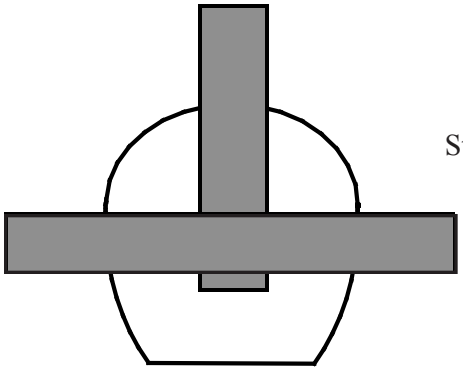
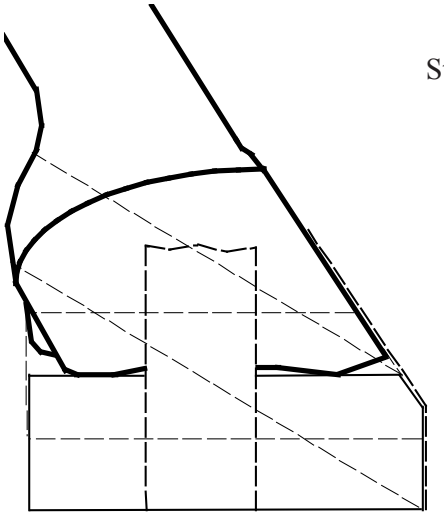


Step 1: Only debris the foot of loose dirt and sole pieces that can be cut away easily. Using hoof testers, start at the toe and test rearward at 1/4" intervals, stopping when you get to the most painful region of the toe. From the most painful area, measure forward about 3/8". This will be the location to cut or rasp a 15 to 20 degree rocker (usually about 1" to 1.25" from the tip of the frog). (Fig. 1-A)

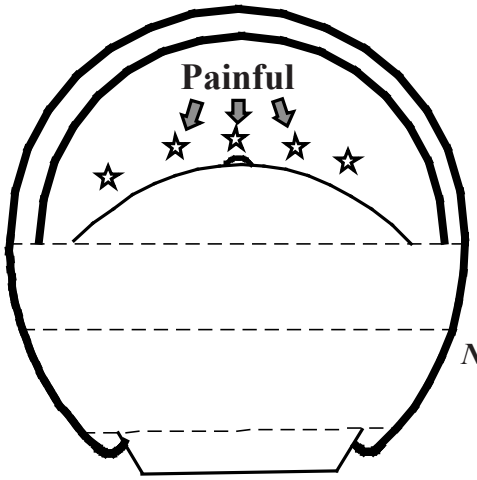
Warning: *Do not get closer than 3/4" from the tip of the frog with your hoof testers. If you have not reached the most painful area at that distance, use the measurements of 1" to 1.25" ahead of the tip of the frog as your breakover location.*



Step 2: Before going to the foot, place two pieces of duct tape on the bottom side of the Styrofoam pad, in a cross pattern. Leave 3" to 4" hanging over each side. These will be your holding tabs.

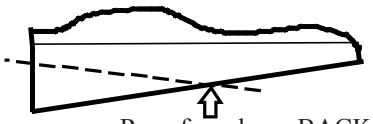


Step 3: Place the Styrofoam pad on the foot so that the back of the pad is lined up with the back of the frog. There can be as much as an inch left ahead of the toe. Rasp the top edge of the pad at an angle so that it continues at the same plane as the hoof wall. Apply duct tape horizontally around the bottom side of the foot and pad at the same time. Make at least two good wraps over the heel bulbs well onto the hair. (Make sure you hold the pad firmly while you make the wraps so that the pad does not twist.)



Step 4: After 24 to 48 hours, the Styrofoam pad should compress to a thickness of about 3/4" (this may take more or less time depending on the activity of the horse). Remove the pad and again, test the foot for the most painful areas. Trim the pad to a corresponding line that is about 1/4" behind the most painful areas. ***(It is seldom the case that the Styrofoam is cut much behind the apex of the frog.)*** Tape the trimmed heel portion back in the foot with a couple pieces of tape.

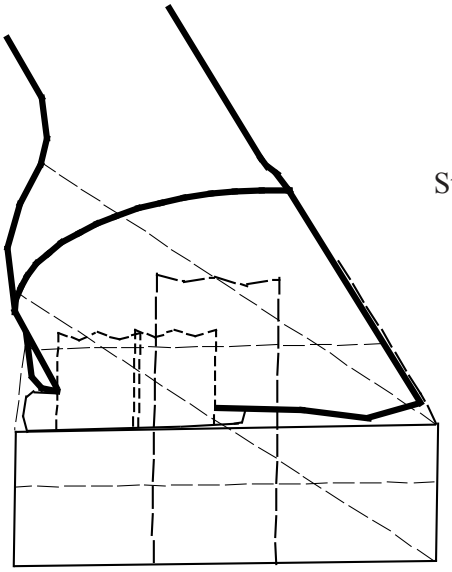
Note: *Keep in mind that you only want the Styrofoam on the portion of the foot that can tolerably bear weight. In most laminitis cases that will be the back portion of the foot, as illustrated.*



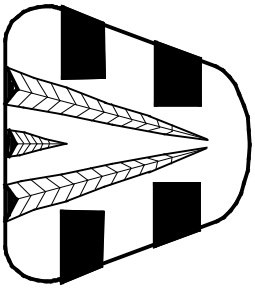
Rasp from here, BACK.

Ground Side

Note: *If the Styrofoam compresses substantially more at the toe than at the heel, it will be important to de-rotate the compressed pad. Start by removing the protective layer of tape on the ground surface. Begin at the middle of the pad and rasp toward the back as illustrated.*



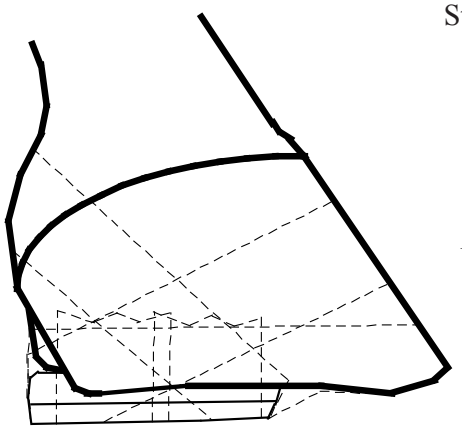
Step 5: Tape a new Styrofoam support block on the foot over the original trimmed and compressed heel piece. Remember to make at least to good wraps over the heel bulbs.



1st Layer

2nd Layer

Step 6: Remove both layers from the foot when the 2nd layer has compressed to about 3/4 of an inch. Trim the 2nd layer to the same shape as the 1st, de-rotating if necessary. Tape the two layers together with a couple pieces of tape, making sure that the tape does not get into the ridges and grooves left by the bars and commissures.



Step 7: Using a couple pieces of tape, attach the combined 1st and 2nd layers to the bottom of the foot. Then, using some Elasticon tape (preferably) or duct tape, secure the layers to the foot with several wraps across the bottom and a few good wraps over the heel bulbs.

Note: *For most cases, 2 layers of compressed Styrofoam will be sufficient. Keep them protected from water damage and they should last until the patients condition stabilizes. If the horse is still uncomfortable, a 3rd layer can be applied, but it will not need to be trimmed once it is compressed.*

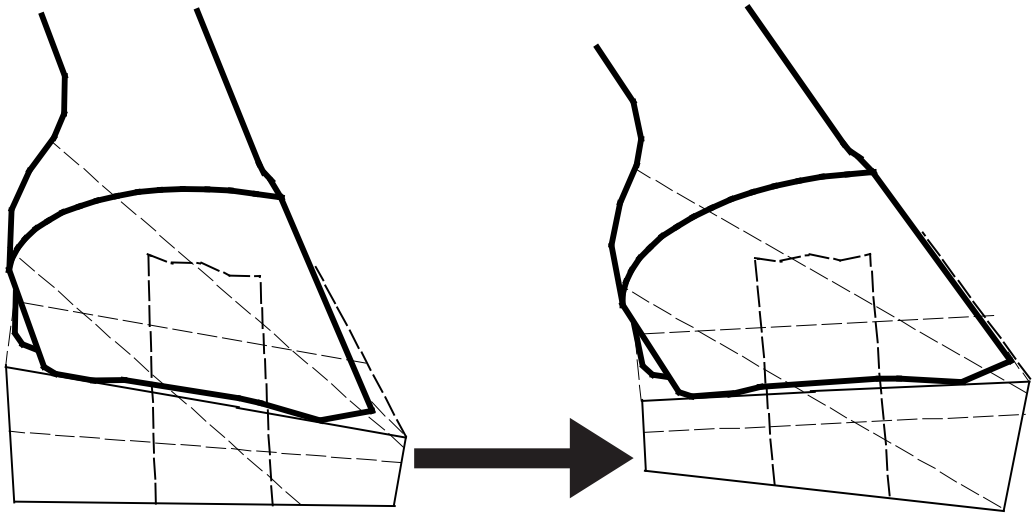
Troubleshooting Tips

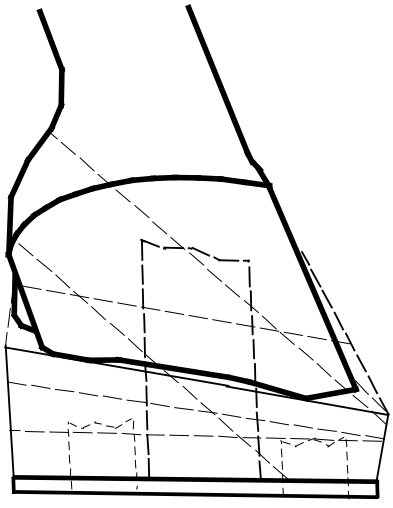
If you notice that the Styrofoam is crushing too rapidly at the toe, there are a couple things that could be the cause.

A) The Styrofoam pad is placed too far back on the foot.
B) The horse is walking on ground that is too uneven or clumpy and soft.
C) The horse has it's legs too far under it during weight bearing.

There are a couple things you can do to remedy these problems and to make sure that they don't happen again.

1- You should remove the block.
2- Turn the block over and turn it around.
3- Reapply the block to the foot. Make sure you line the pad up correctly.





If you find that your problem is do to uneven ground, you can sometimes overcome that by taping a hard, plastic pad or piece of plywood to the bottom of the Styrofoam block. This hard pad should only be left on long enough for the heel portion to compress. Usually this should only take an hour or so. You will find that the sooner you can remove the hard pad, the more comfortable the horse will be.

Additional Note: If the horse does not respond with comfort to the support blocks application (when the horse is lame on one leg only and is not diagnosed with having laminitis) they may be experiencing an abscess or have a P-3 fracture.

Disclosure: *With any acute hoof pain we suggest that you alert your equine practitioner. The Styrofoam Support Block treatment will not harm or detract from any treatment your veterinarian may suggest. In many cases the Styrofoam is continued as a treatment regime.*