



Product of the Month

February's special is **GasterGuard** for digestive support. Go to the website to save 20% this month.

Regular price: \$62.00.

Sale price: \$49.60

New Product Release

We are excited to unveil our new products: Pasture Salve and Pasture Spray.

We have developed a new use for the pasture weeds that irritate us - they make great products for wounds. Use the spray for deeper wounds when salve is not your first choice.

The salve contains comfrey, which the Native Americans referred to as a bone and wound knitter. You can imagine what it does for tissue repair.

As always, seek proper veterinary care for your animals.



Tack Room Talk

Greetings!

When asked to think about the month of February, one might picture hearts, groundhogs, snowstorms, Olympic sports coverage, or The American!

While we have enjoyed all of them this year (well maybe not the snowstorms), when we think of February at SCH our mind goes to the digestive system. As you will read in our column *Go with your Gut*, the digestive system can impact your trip to the winner's circle in ways that you might not suspect.

Each month this year we will be featuring a product from the Spirit Canyon Herbal line with a special sale price, and our newsletter will contain an article related to that product. You can also find more educational articles by visiting our blog.

Wishing you health and happiness,

Rae Lynn

Go With Your Gut!

Have you ever been told to trust your gut? Our instinct is often correct when something just doesn't feel quite right.

Today, consider not only trusting your gut but also look to the guts when it comes to maintaining a healthy horse. The digestive system can impact the obvious such as weight gain and energy, but can also be associated with behavior and joint function.

You might be asking yourself, "What does the digestive system have to do with healthy joints?" To explain the relationship, we must start by discussing Leaky Gut Syndrome. The gastrointestinal system is quite complex, containing many smaller systems that are interdependent. Think of the relationships in the gastrointestinal system like those in your car. If the fuel system is not functioning, it will impact other systems and you could find yourself stranded on the highway with an inoperable vehicle.

Besides digestion, the gastrointestinal system is also tasked with removing ingested and metabolic toxins. In a healthy digestive system, a barrier consisting of a layer of mucous and a large population of healthy bacteria prevents toxins and large protein molecules from entering the rest of the body through the blood stream. Additionally, gut-lining cells bind to toxins and release chemicals that destroy and remove unhealthy substances.

Antibiotics, which decrease healthy bacteria, and non-steroidal anti-inflammatories (NSAIDs) such as Bantamine and phenylbutazone, which prevent the secretion of mucous, break down the barrier and cause it to be permeable. Antacids as well as acid blocking drugs can also disrupt the normal pH in the intestinal tract and upset the balance between healthy and toxic microbes.

Diet also plays an important role in contributing to Leaky Gut Syndrome. Much like the owner who eats an excessive amount of treats, such as cookies and candy, feeding molasses and processed feeds to horses also results in excess yeast. Yeasts thrive in an environment of simple sugars and therefore lessen the population of beneficial microbes.

When the digestive system is impaired, or the mucosal lining is compromised, conditions such as colic, joint inflammation, auto-immune disorders, allergies, and behavior problems may be noticeable to the horse owner. It is now believed that allergies result when large protein molecules escape from the gut into the lymphatic and circulatory system. When this occurs, the immune system responds by forming antibodies to fight against the large protein molecules which often results in food sensitivities and auto-immune conditions, as well as allergic responses such as hives and heaves. When the antigens/antibodies interact with tissue, the horse can experience joint stiffness and soreness. All of the toxins create added stress to the liver as it attempts to process the contaminated blood. When these systems break down, conditions such as colic, hoof problems, irritability, soft tissue injuries, and joint soreness may result.

If you discover that your horse has developed joint inflammation or sudden changes in behavior, don't forget to consider the role of the digestive system in your plan to return your horse to its healthy state. Feeding good quality hay, avoiding excess sweet feeds and extruded feeds lacking roughage, as well as plenty of exercise and stress reduction will contribute to maintaining a healthy digestive system.

When the digestive system has been compromised, it is helpful to re-establish the healthy bacteria in the digestive system with probiotics. Since antibiotics may be required for an infection, it is important to provide probiotics for 30-60 days following the treatment to return the gastrointestinal system to its optimal balance. Supplements that heal and regenerate the mucosal lining, provide a healthy anti-inflammatory response as well as support the liver are also beneficial.

Herbs Featured in GasterGuard



Meadowsweet (*Filipendula ulmaria*) - Cooling, drying, gastric-acid trophorestorative, anti-inflammatory.

Digestive Indications: Gastritis, heartburn; inflammation/burning in gastrointestinal tract, gastric or duodenal ulcer, nausea with headache; intestinal permeability; diarrhea.

Neuromuscular Indications: Tendonitis, arthritis, connective-tissue weakness of any kind, neuralgia, gout, other pains.

Chamomile (*Matricaria recutita*) - Cooling, drying, nervine, anti-inflammatory, stomachic.

Digestive Indications: Ulcers, gastritis, nervous indigestion, diarrhea.

Mental/Emotional Indications: Nervous irritability.

Neuromuscular Indications: Inflammatory conditions, neuralgia, sciatica, earache.



Calendula (*Marigold*) - Cooling, drying, vulnerary, antiseptic, anti-inflammatory.

Digestive Indications: Slow-healing duodenal or gastric ulcers.

Immune/Systemic Indications: Chronic infections, systemic candidiasis.

Marshmallow Root (*Althea officinalis*) - Neutral, moistening, demulcent.

Digestive Indications: Esophagitis, gastritis, gastric ulcers, ulcerative colitis, diverticulitis, irritable bowel syndrome.



Raspberry Leaf (*Rubus idaeus*) - Cooling, drying, astringent, tonic, spasmolytic, vulnerary.

Digestive Indications: Diarrhea.

Licorice Root (*Glycyrrhiza glabra*) - Moistening, adaptogen, demulcent, expectorant, laxative, antiviral.

Digestive Indications: Indigestion, gastric ulcers, ulcerative colitis, chronic and stubborn constipation.

Immune/Systemic Indications: Candidiasis.

Endocrine Indications: Adrenal fatigue.



Source: *300 Herbs, Their Indications & Contraindications: A Materia Medica & Repertory*; Alfs, Matthew, 2003.