



# SPIRIT CANYON HERBALS

## Product of the Month

September's product of the month is [Anolull](#): our own herbal aspirin blend.

[Sign-up](#) to our mailing list and receive \$10 and free shipping towards Anolull, good through September 30.



## Tack Room Talk

I don't know about you, but usually by early fall my body is feeling the effects of having been pushed to its limits all summer. This year though, it's been a little bit different. Instead of being on my horse, I spent quite a bit of time sitting beside a hospital bed while my daughter recovered from several surgeries. When I did get an opportunity to climb back on and compete I quickly remembered a number of recently forgotten muscles. Naturally, the first thing I did the next morning was reach for a pain reliever.

As I swallowed some ibuprofen, my daughter told me that after her recent surgery she has decided to rethink what she takes for pain relief. Last month she had a jaw surgery and was prescribed an alternating regimen of ibuprofen and acetaminophen/oxycodone for pain management. Three days later she was having emergency surgery for a perforated intestine. Although a gastrointestinal specialist has yet to determine the cause, he did mention a couple of possibilities: a bacterial infection, or an ulcer caused by stress or non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs), such as ibuprofen.

My daughter's experience is a good example of my own reasons in giving my horse herbal analgesics and anti-inflammatories for pain management. In addition to the stress of traveling and competition, I don't like to further disrupt the gastrointestinal system with NSAIDs. Her comment was a good reminder for me to take the time to encapsulate these same herbs for myself and not just have them in the barn and trailer. It was also a reminder that I should write about pain management, the appropriate use of herbs, and the use of drugs such as phenylbutazone (Bute) and flunixin meglumine (Bantamine), which are commonly used in equines.

Wishing you health and happiness,

Rae Lynn

## Pain, NSAIDs, and Herbal Aspirins

### Is Pain Beneficial?

As horse owners, we take our animals care very seriously and we want them to be comfortable and healthy. Whether they are kicking and playing in the pasture or competing in the arena, there are times when a horse will move in a manner that results in injury, inflammation, and pain. There are also chronic cases of pain that horses can experience, such as arthritis.

Pain, redness, heat, and swelling are all part of the natural inflammatory process. When the body is injured, it produces chemicals that result in pain, tissue destruction, healing, and finally repair. Pain is the body's way of saying "rest to repair." When pain is diminished or absent, the horse may move more than it should, or appear to be ready for competition when in reality it isn't, which can cause further if not permanent damage. None of us care to see our horses suffer, so we all tend to err on the side of pain management.

### NSAIDs

In recent history, the most common pain management strategy for horses includes the use of conventional pharmaceuticals such as phenylbutazone (Bute) and flunixin meglumine (Banamine), which are both NSAIDs. Phenylbutazone is used frequently as it is inexpensive and effective at reducing inflammation.

When tissue is damaged it releases prostaglandins, produced by Cox-2 enzymes, which result in inflammation, pain and fever. Healthy tissues also release prostaglandins, produced by Cox-1 enzymes, which regulate blood flow to the kidneys and gastrointestinal tract, and produce mucus for the stomach lining. NSAIDs work by blocking the production of prostaglandins, but unfortunately they block both Cox-1 and Cox-2 types. Pain and inflammation is subdued, but so is circulation and mucus production in the kidneys and stomach. Toxicity occurs when these beneficial prostaglandins are continually blocked, which can result in kidney damage and gastric ulcers. Phenylbutazone can be more toxic than other NSAIDs because most of the drug remains in the bloodstream, and higher doses can also be toxic to the liver.

Used as directed, phenylbutazone can be a safe product for most horses. However, those that are most at risk for sensitivity include foals, performance horses that travel, ponies, older horses, horses with kidney and liver disorders, and individuals prone to tying up. Dehydrated horses are also at higher risk as the drug will be more concentrated.

### Is there an alternative to NSAIDs for Pain Management?

Given the complications associated with many pain relievers and anti-inflammatory drugs, a growing number of people are returning to herbs for pain management. Herbs such as White Willow Bark and Devil's Claw have been used for hundreds and, in some cases, thousands of years with few side effects.

The first recorded use of White Willow Bark was more than 3500 years ago. It has been used through the ages by the Egyptians, Greeks, Romans, and Indians as an analgesic (pain reliever) and an antipyretic (fever reducer). Various controlled studies comparing White Willow Bark to NSAIDs and aspirin indicate comparable efficacy with fewer side effects.

Although herbs are generally thought to be safer than NSAIDs, their mode of action should also be considered when using them. For example, White Willow Bark works by inhibiting Cox 1 and Cox 2 enzymes, much like NSAIDs. And while Devil's Claw is a Cox 2 inhibitor, it can also produce gastric acid and be irritating to the stomach. These side effects are a good example of why herbal blends are usually a better option than administering a single herb, and more specifically they are why we developed our Anolull blend.

In our Anolull blend, we combine White Willow Bark and Devil's Claw with other herbs that have properties that protect the stomach, liver, and kidneys. For example, it contains Chamomile, which is an anti-inflammatory, a muscle relaxant, an anti-spasmodic, and an anti-ulcerogenic. It also contains ginger, which is a stomachic as well as an anti-inflammatory and analgesic. The formula is rounded out with Ashwagandha, which is used as a tonic.

### About Anolull

Anolull comes in a powder and is easy to administer, either by mixing with feed or by mixing with water and given with a dosing syringe. The herbs it contains have been proven effective with published research, and have been shown to be less harmful than pharmaceutical NSAIDs. As an added bonus, it also contains herbs with protective qualities to strengthen and support the overall inflammatory process. It is an essential component of our own veterinary supplies.

## Our Risk-Free Guarantee!

We believe in our mission, and we believe in our products. All of our blends come with a 100% risk-free guarantee: if you are not completely satisfied we will refund your money, and we will work with you and your animal to create a custom solution to your problem. Contact us for more information on any of our products or to inquire about custom blends.

## Herbs Featured in Anolull

**Chamomile** (*Matricaria chamomila*) - bitter, spicy, neutral; calmative, nervine, antispasmodic, anodyne, diaphoretic, carminative; liver, stomach, lungs.

Is used for nervousness, headaches, anxiety, cramps and spasms. It is also beneficial for febrile diseases such as colds and flu. It is frequently used for digestive complaints and taken regularly will gently regulate the bowels.



**White Willow Bark** (*Salix nigra*) - bitter, cold; alterative, anodyne, febrifuge, astringent, antiperiodic and vermifuge; liver, kidneys, heart.

Used to treat headache caused by dampness and heat in the gastrointestinal tract, rheumatic aches and pains, recurring fevers, ovarian pains, dyspepsia, and edema.

**Devil's Claw** (*Harpagophytum procumbens*) - bitter, cool; anti-inflammatory, antirheumatic; liver, stomach.

Treats arthritis, rheumatism, diabetes, stomach disorders.



**Ginger** (*Zingiberis officinale*) - spicy, hot; stimulant, antispasmodic, carminative; heart, lung, spleen, stomach, kidney.

Internal warming stimulant. One of the best herbs to use for nausea and vomiting and is said to warm the center (stomach), aid digestion and assimilation, relieve cold spasms and cramps.

**Ashwagandha** (*Withania somnifera*) - bitter, sweet, warm; yang tonic, sedative, astringent; lungs, kidney.

Treats weakness of the back and knees, joint and nerve pain, arthritis, insomnia, neurasthenia, wasting diseases. It is the primary strengthening tonic used in Ayurveda.



Source: *Planetary Herbology*; Tierra, M. 1998.