

## Reiki balance

Everything, whether animate or inanimate, it is made of molecules, which are comprised of atoms made of charged particles called neutrons, protons and electrons. So it makes sense that everything on earth has energy fields around it and energy running through it.

Reiki means universal life force energy. Its roots come from Dr. Mikao Usui, a Christian minister in Japan who set out to understand how Jesus performed the miracle of healing. He discovered that Reiki provides a channel of energy for the purpose of healing.

Through a series of attunements, the Reiki practitioner becomes a conduit to deliver energy through meridians in the body, to strengthen the recipient so the body has the ability to heal itself. With practice and training the Reiki Master knows when the person has had enough and what to do next.

At first, horses are antsy when they feel energy flow, but they settle down and accept it. Often, within minutes their eyes are half shut, they yawn and some even fall asleep--it balances the mind, body and spirit. Physically the body relaxes and becomes more round, forward moving and balanced. The body is not as tight, so there is less physical strain and pain. When the body is relaxed, the mind is peaceful.

If pain is reduced the horse is less cranky, less aggressive and more willing to please. When both the horse and rider receive Reiki, they communicate better and perform better as a team.



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### SPORTS MASSAGE DONE:

Before an event, serves as the warm-up  
After the event, reduces soreness.  
Regularly, can prevent future injury.

### BENEFITS OF SPORTS MASSAGE:

- Improves blood circulation.
- Promotes healing.
- Prevents future injuries.
- Enhances muscle tone.
- Increases range of motion.
- Eases muscle spasms.
- Reduces inflammation and swelling.
- Relieves tension.
- Hastens elimination of waste products and toxins.
- Lengthens connective tissues.
- Breaks down adhesions.
- Decreases danger of developing fibrosis.
- Improves temperament of the animal.
- Creates synovial fluid in joints from increased circulation.
- Boosts performance and endurance.
- Restores mobility.
- Extends the overall life of the horse.

**When your horse resists**, refuses or acts up, consider it a signal that something is wrong. Bucking, rearing, tossing the head, refusing the proper lead and an inability to bend can all be signs of muscle injury.

**Sports massage focuses** on the cause of muscle injury with the intent of relieving pain and preventing future injury

**A horse worked regularly** or at a high level of training can benefit from sports massage because it keeps muscles pliable. When properly done, sports massage prepares the body for exercise and restores free motion.

**Done prior to injury**, sports massage is preventive care. When done after injury, the massage therapist can work in conjunction with your veterinarian to heal your horse faster.

**When muscles become stressed** they develop small areas of tension that feel like speed bumps. Left untreated, they grow, cause pressure, restrict movement and become sources of discomfort and pain. As the spot increases in size, it draws in fluid, which can act like glue and cause adhesions. When a muscle reaches the point where it can no longer move, it will pull and tear.

**Sports massage compresses** muscles against bone to spread out fibers so blood can flow more easily into the muscle. Sports massage also helps break apart adhesions.

**As blood flows** to the muscle it carries life-giving oxygen and nutrients. Oxygen in the muscle reduces spasms. Blood also carries metabolic waste and toxins out of muscles. Oxygen in the muscle reduces spasms.

**As tension spots increases** in size they also draws in fluid, which can act as glue and cause adhesions. Sports massage helps break apart adhesions.

**Tight muscles also injure tendons.** Tendons -the ends of muscles that attach- to bone, are less pliable and more susceptible to injury. If the belly of the muscle is relaxed, the entire muscle is longer and less likely to pull on the tendon.

**Injury can happen** during training, performance, when loading on a trailer and even when the horse is simply turned out to pasture. Muscle pain can be from injury to the muscle itself, or from injury to another part of the body, like a bone or ligament.

**Massage is not a substitute** for veterinary care. The massage therapist generally sees an injured horse after the veterinarian. But if the massage is done first, the veterinarian should be called if there is no improvement after the first massage.

