

Equine Muscle Relief Therapy (EMRT™)

By Sue Connolly

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Equine Muscle Release Therapy (EMRT™) and was brought to the UK in 1997 by Alison Goward, who first developed this therapy in Australia. Equine Muscle Release Therapy grew out of the famous Bowen Technique for humans. This was pioneered in Australia by Tom Bowen and is now recognised as a powerful treatment throughout the world. Alison quickly realised that the human technique could not be directly transposed to horses. They are quadrupeds with a very different muscular structure, an inflexible spine, a differing digestive system and no gall bladder. Thus she embarked on what is a continuing programme of research and development. It is the only equine treatment accredited by the Bowen Association of Australia, and is the result of more than ten years of development and on-going research.

Sue Connolly, EMRT™ practitioner explains, "Equine Muscle Release Therapy is an important piece in the jigsaw of horse care. It is very gentle and non-invasive but, by releasing muscle spasms, it can have a positive effect in surprising ways."

Sue continues, "You would think that traumatised muscles simply prevent a full range of movement, but, it's important to realise they also reduce circulation and entrap nerves. By compromising the circulation, oxygen and nutrients are prevented from reaching the cells. This means waste products accumulate and toxicity will build up in the muscles. Trapped nerve fibres will cause constant pain, muscle wastage and a reduced nerve function. EMRT™ works to alleviate these problems by putting the body back into balance. By doing so, this allows the horse to resume work earlier than would normally be possible."

The treatment is recommended, for any horse in competitive training, to aid recovery and to speed the rehabilitation of muscle and soft tissue damage.

Registered EMRT™ practitioners will only attend your horse if you have first obtained the consent of your veterinary surgeon. On their first visit he or she will assess the musculo-skeletal function of the horse and its presented behaviour. An assessment may involve the EMRT™ practitioner observing the horse in hand and under saddle. He or she will also palpate specific muscle groups to identify areas of trauma and soreness.

Visible signs of damage may include a restriction of the horse's movement, changed behaviour and overbuilt or wasted muscles. Internally the fascia, (a fibrous membrane that covers, supports and separates muscles) responding to injury or stress, may be holding muscles in a contracted position (spasm) and this can pull the skeleton out of alignment. By compressing this tissue the hardened fascia may simultaneously inhibit waste products being flushed, so that toxins build up.

The therapy works by activating 'proprioceptors', small nerve cells in the fascia. Healthy fascia is supple, moist and mobile, and covers virtually every organ, muscle, blood vessel, nerve and bone in the body. It allows free movement between different parts of the body and facilitates the flow of bodily fluids. It is the equine equivalent of the Pentium Processor! By stimulating the proprioceptors, EMRT™ allows the brain to re-programme the area of the trauma. It frees congestion and, by correcting restrictions and misalignments of fascia and tissue, enables the body to return to a state of balance and symmetry.



Equine Muscle Relief Therapy (EMRT™)

Brought to you by "The Naturally Healthy Pet"

EMRT™ is appropriate for both chronic and acute problems. The UK-based training course takes approx two years and is only open to experienced horse professionals. It is a rigorous mix of workshops, home study, case histories and assessment. Final examination is validated by Alison Goward and equine specialist Dr T J McEvoy QDAH (Hons), BVSc(Hons), MRCVS. By qualification the practitioners will have a sound knowledge of horse anatomy and physiology, and of bio-mechanics. A good sense of ethics and respect for the veterinary profession is instilled.

A recent introduction is CCMRT™ Cat and Canine Muscle Release Therapy working to balance your dog and cat following trauma with the same benefits of EMRT™.

To find your nearest registered practitioner or enquire about training please visit our website www.emrt.eques.com.au

Equine Muscle Release Therapy can be a vital piece of horse care by releasing muscle spasms, it can have a positive effect in surprising ways. The treatment is recommended but would need the consent of your veterinary for a horse to undergo treatment. It aids recovery and speeds the rehabilitation of muscle and soft tissue damage.