

New study reports that whole body vibration improves equine topline.

According to a report published in *Equine Veterinary Education*, a journal for equine veterinary clinicians, whole body vibration (WBV) provides benefits in horses including improved size and symmetry of equine back muscles (more specifically the m. multifidus), which may ultimately lead to improved performance, prevent injuries and speed up rehabilitation.



The research was conducted using a Vitafloor® VMO mobile linear vibrating platform.

Whole body vibration (WBV) in humans has been proven to increase muscle activity and strength, improve postural balance and reduce chronic back pain, which led veterinarians to explore the benefits of WBV in the horse.

Research participants included nine horses, aged 9 to 19, with clinical signs of back pain and associated lameness. The horses underwent 30 minutes of WBV twice a day, five days a week, for 60 days in addition to their normal exercise routine.

The WBV was administered with horses standing quietly on a Vitafloor VMO vibrating platform which applied vibration to the feet.

The journal article, "Whole body vibration affects the cross-sectional area and symmetry of the m. multifidus of the thoracolumbar spine in the horse," details the study conducted by Bart Halsberghe, DVM, CVMA, cert. ISELP, and Russ Peterson, DVM, MS, of Peninsula Equine Medical Center in Menlo Park, Calif., and Paul Gordon Ross, MS, DVM, of Western University

Written by CRM

Tuesday, 01 November 2016 02:14

of Health Science College of Veterinary Medicine in Pomona, Calif.

Results, measured through ultrasonography, indicated that a horse that receives WBV will have an increase in the total cross-sectional area (CSA) at each spinal level, an indicator of m. multifidus hypertrophy. Hypertrophy involves an increase in size of skeletal muscle. Dr. Halsberghe noted that this deep back muscle (the m. multifidus) is important in local stabilization of the spine as well as proprioception, the latter being responsible for proper posture, motion and balance.



“From a practical perspective, being able to increase the size of this muscle may play a key role in the treatment and prevention of back pain in the horse, as has been shown in humans,” said Dr. Halsberghe.

“Moreover improvement in muscle symmetry has been suggested to be a sign of the muscle returning to normal and, as such, improved spinal health,” he continued. “The importance of spinal health should not be underestimated as data indicates that 74% of horses with primary back pain show lameness and 32% of the horses with a primary limb lameness have back pain. Furthermore WBV can be used in maintaining or even improving muscle mass when horses are laid up for an injury with the usual deconditioning as a consequence. With the current research, WBV appears to be an invaluable adjunctive therapy to maintain muscle mass as well as bone density in these horses during their rehabilitation.” Dr. Halsberghe added that his study received no outside funding.

“The Vitafloor VMO model used in the study is one of our most popular models for use in whole body vibration technology for horses and humans, which is known to be highly effective in boosting mental and physical health,” said Holm Oostveen, CEO of Vitafloor USA, Inc. in Northern California’s Aromas.

“Vitafloor is focused on Whole Body Therapy that not only targets the legs, but also the upper body and organs, ensuring better health and injury prevention. It also accelerates the healing

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process and helps with colic prevention.”

The Vitafloor vibrating floor system is the innovator and international leader in equine vibration equipment offering versatile physical training and countless therapeutic benefits to horses. Vitafloor’s unparalleled vertical vibrating platforms are safe as well as easy to use. Vitafloor is designed exclusively for horses and is based on the well-known principles of Whole Body Vibration Training that are used to train astronauts to promote the development of muscle tone and bone density. Vitafloor is a proven and highly effective therapy for horses and is widely recognized by leading equestrians and veterinarians world-wide.

Edited press release provided by Vitafloor. For more information, visit www.vitafloor.com or call 831-319-2704.