Effective Management of EMS (Equine Metabolic Syndrome) and PPID (Cushing’s Disease)

**DIAGNOSIS:**
- Do not fast your horse before the blood draw. Have hay or pasture available. No grain
- No heavy exercise or trailering 48 hours prior to blood draw
- Draw blood in quiet barn
  - Request these tests: ACTH, Insulin, Glucose.

**What your vet needs to know:**
- Blood should be kept cool, then spun and separated within 2 hours
  (4 hours maximum, but not recommended)
- Freeze the plasma; freeze or chill the serum
- Send to Cornell (recommended) on ice by overnight courier
  - NOTE: Discount shipping labels are available through Cornell.

**DIET AND DRUGS:**
- EMS is managed with diet
- PPID is managed with pergolide (brand name Prascend®) or cabergoline

**IF YOU ARE IN CRISIS, IMPLEMENT THE TEMPORARY EMERGENCY DIET.**

**TEMPORARY EMERGENCY DIET**
(daily amounts for 1,000 lb. horse)
- 20 lbs grass hay (weighed dry), soaked for 30 minutes in hot water or 60 minutes in cold water. Drain the water where the horses can’t get at it (full of sugar)
- 1 to 2 Tablespoons iodized salt
- 1 teaspoon magnesium oxide
- ¾ cup ground or stabilized flax
- 2,000 IU Vitamin E (must be in contact with an oil in order to be well absorbed)

**BASIC NON-EMERGENCY DIET**
- Grass hay of less than 10% ESC – NOT WSC or NSC – plus starch, fed at a rate of 2% of body weight
- Minerals balanced to the hay (not difficult once your wrap your head around it)
- 1.5 oz per 500 lbs ground or stabilized flax
- 1 to 2 Tablespoons iodized salt
- 2 IU per lb body weight Vitamin E (must be in contact with oil to be well absorbed)

**TRIM:**
- Trim should be balanced to internal structures of the hoof
- Short toe is essential. Long toes may look normal (because they are common), but long toes interfere with healing and can cause continued pain
- Ideally, laminitic horses should be trimmed at intervals of no more than every 4 weeks.
  Every 2 weeks is ideal at the beginning of the recovery stage

**EXERCISE:**
Exercise is the best insulin-buster available, but a laminitic horse should never be forced to move. Do not ride a laminitic horse, or lunge, or work one in a round-pen (no circles) for a minimum of 6 months after the laminitic episode has resolved. Twelve (12) months is a better interval to allow for a full hoof cycle of normal laminar attachments

Equine Cushing’s and Insulin Resistance Group Inc.

**Free Outreach Group:** https://ecir.groups.io/g/main

**Website:** https://www.ecirhorse.org

No pasture, apples, carrots, sweet feeds, grains, or most bagged feeds (list of safe bagged feeds on the back)
**Safe Feeds and Acceptable Ration Balancers**

**SAFE FEEDS LIST**

- **Beet Pulp** (molasses-free) Rinsed/soaked/rinsed
  Soak anywhere from 15 minutes in warm water to a couple of hours in cold water – enough so the pellets/shreds swell/soften.

- **Soy Hull Pellets**
- **Triple Crown Naturals Timothy Balance Cubes**
- **Ontario Dehy Timothy Balance Cubes**
- **Nuzu Stabul 1**
- **LMF Low NSC Stage 1**
- **LMF Low NSC Complete**
- **Haystack Low Carb/Low Fat Pellets**
- **Hoffman’s BalancIR**

**REAL RESULTS OF BALANCING MINERALS TO HAY**

**LIST OF ACCEPTABLE RATION BALANCERS**

For best results, one should feed a custom mix of minerals balanced to your hay; in lieu of that, using one of these ready-made balancers can be a second-best option:

- **Uckele U-Balance Foundation**
- **California Trace Plus**
- **Colorado Mix** (no selenium)
- **Colorado Se Mix**
- **Vermont Blend**
- **VifArgent Le Cheval au Naturel**
- **Mad Barn AminoTrace+**

For areas where added Manganese is necessary:

- **Equi-VM**
- **Sport Horse Grass**
- **Equi-Base Grass**
- **Arizona Copper Complete**
- **Mad Barn Omneity Premix Powder**
- **Mad Barn Omneity Premix Pellets**
- **Mad Barn Trace Mineral Pack**

It is important to find out if you are in a Selenium-rich or Selenium-deficient area; the same applies to Manganese. Your agricultural extension office should be able to tell you.

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