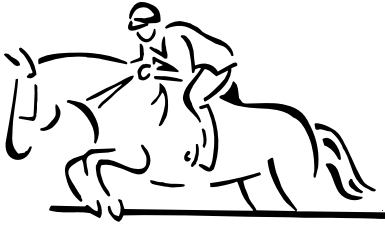


EQUINE REHAB AND THERAPY

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Hip exercise program

From Physical Therapy and massage for the horse, Jean-Pierre Pailloux

The hip is the power and drive of the horse. Hips can become sore from a number of causes, impact traumas (kicks, poor or abrupt trailering, ect.) cumulative strain issues (compensatory overwork or poorly conditioned exercises) or from a number of other areas, like hocks, lower back strains, ect. This set of exercises are useful when recovering from hip problems or building up a weak hip.

- 1) Work is performed on the pain free side, which is better able to support it at a 2:1 Ratio. For every circle or exercise done on the painful side, two exercises are done on the pain free side. Right _____ Left _____
- 2) A lowered neck is essential, a chambon could be used; slow trot on lunge, without engagement, so that impulsion is just maintained. Gait should not be pushed beyond this for 10 – 15 days.
- 3) From 10th day, ascents and descents can be made at the walk, on soft ground (see inclined work)
- 4) From the 15th day, cavalettis, with the bars on the ground, provide a useful service for the muscles to adjust to variations in lengthening.
- 5) Keep horse confined for this 15-day period, uninhibited movement leads to poor coordination and counter productive movements.

INCLINED WORK

Find or create an area 15-20 m diameter, which ideally, is flat on one half and rises 1.5 m (4-5 feet) on the other half. The purpose is to re-educate the back/hip and there are three portions to each circle, flat, ascent and descent. The work is performed on the lunge, so the back is free and not bearing any weight.

- 1) Descent – Eccentric work on the abdominal muscles (the effort involved in breaking on a downward slope) and hip flexors.
- 2) Ascent – Synergistic and concentric work on the extensors of the hip and back (gluteal and paravertebral muscles). These muscles work concentrically during propulsion.

Initially, the exercise should last _____ min on each rein, building up to _____ min per rein. Sessions per week _____.

The exercise has the particular virtue of developing the Top/Bottom line relationship, and helps correct problems caused by overspecialized movements. Improvements are usually soon seen in horses that have weak backs and poor muscular strength and propulsion. Remember, impulsion is propulsion combined with a willing attitude and mind. Pain is a common inhibitor of true impulsion.