

Acupressure helps your “OLE GRAY MARE” stay fit and healthy

by Amy Snow and Nancy Zidonis



Sara, age 20, stays fit and mentally active, living on 38 acres with two pasture mates. She enjoys weekly trail riding, regular groundwork, training in the arena, and acupressure sessions every five days.

“The ole gray mare, she ain’t what she use to be.” True, but who is? Age takes its toll on all of us, including our beloved horses. We tend to think of them as fit and active, then one day, they suddenly look older. The hollow above the eye seems deeper, muscles look less toned and full, white whiskers sprout on the muzzle, the gait appears stiff – and then we remember ten years have passed.

There are many more senior horses now than ever before. Horses in the 15 to 20-year-old range are still competing in some disciplines and even 30-year-olds are becoming more common. In fact, according to reports, more than 15% of the horse population in North America is over 20.

These elders have become our dear friends, and we want to do everything possible to extend their lives with as much comfort as possible. Two easy ways to do this is with movement and acupressure.

Aging animals need to keep moving

The horse’s body is designed to move and seniors are no exception. This means more turnout, low-stress trail

riding, or training in the arena. Physical activity supports her digestive processes, enhances nutrient absorption, and maintains the strength and flexibility of her muscles, joints, and other soft tissues. Additionally, social contact with humans or pasture mates keeps up her mental attitude and spirit.

Many older horses are reluctant to keep moving because they are in pain; arthritis is very common. Joints, tendons and ligaments can become very sore due to inflammation and/or degeneration. Keep in mind that once the body slows down, though, the potential for internal disease goes up, so techniques to reduce pain and promote movement are paramount.

Acupressure is a great gift to seniors

Offering your horse consistent bodywork helps stave off the painful effects of arthritis, soft tissue problems, gastrointestinal issues and other conditions associated with aging. Acupressure has been used for centuries to maintain equine health, and you need little or no experience to enjoy tremendous success in supporting your horse’s long-term well

being. This is because the energetics of acupressure are present whether you have in-depth knowledge of Traditional Chinese Medicine or not.

An acupressure session for equine elders

Traditional acupressure points, called “acupoints,” are known to have effects on specific body tissues and functions. By stimulating the following acupoints, you’ll help your horse continue to move freely and comfortably, keeping her body functions strong, balanced, and healthy.

Bladder 11, Great Shuttle, energetically nourishes bone with blood and life-promoting energy, helping to keep arthritis in check.

Bladder 17, Diaphragm’s Hollow, strongly influences the circulation of blood and energy, providing balance to the entire body.

Stomach 36, Leg Three Miles, is used to aid digestion and promote gastrointestinal health while regulating and tonifying blood and life-force energy. This acupoint

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his physical body but also provides you both with a great bonding experience.

You can't stop the effects of time, but you can offer your horse support through her golden years, which could last 20 years or more. An extra bonus is a stronger connection between you and your equine.

As a senior horse's caretaker, you can apply many additional ways to help her stay healthy and physically fit. These include diet, play, rest, raining, turnout, social contact, and regular veterinary, dental, and hoof care.

AMY SNOW AND NANCY ZIDONIS ARE THE AUTHORS OF: *Equine Acupressure: A Working Manual*, *The Well-Connected Dog: A Guide to Canine Acupressure* AND *Acu-Cat: A Guide to Feline Acupressure*. THEY OWN TALLGRASS PUBLISHERS, WHICH OFFERS MERIDIAN CHARTS FOR HORSES, DOGS, AND CATS, AS WELL AS *Introducing Equine Acupressure*, A 50-MINUTE TRAINING VIDEO. THEY FOUNDED TALLGRASS ANIMAL ACUPRESSURE INSTITUTE WHICH PROVIDES HANDS-ON AND ONLINE TRAINING COURSES WORLDWIDE INCLUDING A PRACTITIONER CERTIFICATION PROGRAM. CALL 888-841-7211, VISIT WWW.ANIMALACUPRESSURE.COM OR EMAIL INFO@ANIMALACUPRESSURE.COM