



Advanced Therapies for Soft Tissue Healing

Injuries to horses' tendons and ligaments can be very frustrating to treat because of the long recovery time and high incidence of recurrence. Fortunately, new technology now allows MHVP to provide advanced therapies that enhance healing to produce a normal, fully-functional tendon or ligament without your horse needing to leave the farm.

Tendons and ligaments are made up of thousands of small, spindle-like fibers, which provide the strength and elasticity that is essential for horses to perform in any discipline. Injuries to tendons and ligaments occur when the tissue fibers are overloaded and tear. Common signs of a tendon or ligament injury are swelling, heat, pain and lameness. These injuries are usually diagnosed using ultrasound to look at the fiber pattern of the affected tendon or ligament. Injured structures will often be enlarged with disrupted fiber patterns.

Traditional treatment for soft tissue injuries involves stall rest with hand-walking, cold therapy, and NSAIDs (bute or banamine) and a very conservative rehabilitation program. Although horses can successfully recover from these injuries with traditional therapy, many don't ever fully recover or reinjure themselves shortly after returning to work. This is because scar tissue, which is not elastic, develops in the injured area and makes tendon and ligament overload more likely. Therapies such as platelet rich plasma and stem cells can produce a higher quality heal and return the structure to its normal, healthy function.

Platelet Rich Plasma (PRP)

PRP is derived from a horse's own blood and provides high concentrations of platelets and beneficial growth factors to the injured area. A sample of blood is taken from the horse and spun down in a specialized centrifuge, which separates the red blood cells from the plasma. A portion of the plasma with the highest concentration of platelets is extracted and immediately injected into the injured area, usually under ultrasound guidance. Growth factors are released from the platelets and promote healthy healing including connective tissue production and blood vessel formation.

Stem Cells

Stem cells are derived from a horse's bone marrow and are capable of maturing into numerous specialized cells, including those that make up healthy tendons and ligaments. Stem cells are usually used in cases where a major tear has occurred and the body is unlikely to be able to fill the defect with healthy tissue. Bone marrow is taken from the horse's sternum and sent to a laboratory where the stem cells are cultured over a few weeks to produce millions of stem cells. The stem cells are then packaged and sent back to us for injection into the injury under ultrasound guidance.



Please call our office or speak with our veterinarians the next time they are visiting your farm if you have any questions or think your horse might benefit from these therapies.

New Digital Radiography Unit

We are pleased to announce that Mid-Hudson Veterinary Practice has added a digital radiography (DR) unit to our arsenal of diagnostic tools. This unit allows instant stall-side processing of radiographs (x-rays) and provides excellent image resolution and quality. Digital radiography is especially helpful for in-depth lameness workups and pre-purchase exams when numerous images are taken. This unit will be used in addition to our computed radiography (CR) system so that all of our doctors will still have the ability to take radiographs in the case of an emergency.

