

NATURAL DETOX SUPPORT

Promoting Your Horse's Natural Balance



HOW DOES YOUR HORSE'S METABOLISM WORK?

Understanding your horse's metabolism is complex enough to fill multiple books, but we'll give you the key points.

Understanding Metabolism

At its core, metabolism is a process where food is broken down in the gut, absorbed, and transformed within the body, while waste products are eliminated. This complex system requires oxygen and water to function. Your horse's body operates like a 24/7 chemical factory, constantly working to maintain itself, grow, move, and reproduce. This incredible feat involves billions of simultaneous chemical reactions occurring throughout all cells and tissues.

The process includes both anabolic (building up) and catabolic (breaking down) reactions, along with numerous regulatory processes that orchestrate them. Smooth metabolic function depends not only on a steady supply of essential nutrients but also on the body's ability to efficiently process, break down, and eliminate waste products.

HOW THE ORGANS ACT TOGETHER

The Digestive System

While some food waste remains in the gut for direct elimination, this is only a small portion. About 85% of nutrients are absorbed and transported to the liver through the portal vein system. The intestinal mucosa cells act as gatekeepers, screening everything that enters the body. These cells should reject any incompatible substances immediately. Additionally, the gut lining houses numerous immune cells that help prevent harmful substances and pathogens from entering the body. If the intestinal mucosa is damaged, whether through inflammation or leaky gut syndrome, these harmful substances can breach the intestinal wall and burden your horse's metabolism.

The Liver: A Bodie's Chemical Processing Plant

The liver serves as both the body's second major screening station and its primary chemical processing plant. This vital organ manages all absorbed nutrients - sorting, transforming, storing, and redistributing them throughout the body via the bloodstream. Its responsibilities extend far beyond regulating blood sugar levels by filtering glucose and converting it to glycogen or fat. The liver also oversees protein supply, fat metabolism, stores various vitamins and trace elements, and acts as the body's main waste management facility.

Through complex detoxification reactions, the liver processes leftover products from protein and fat metabolism, along with ingested toxins, medications, and other metabolic waste. It transforms these substances into compounds that can be safely eliminated from the body.

Bile

Some waste products exit the body through bile, which releases them into the intestines for elimination with manure.

Kidneys

Most waste travels via the bloodstream to the kidneys for urinary elimination. The process begins when blood fluid is pressed into the kidney's filtration system. This "primary" urine still contains all kinds of essential water-soluble components: nutrients, minerals, trace elements, and hormones. The kidneys then perform their crucial task: recovering valuable nutrients while retaining waste products like urea and other liver-processed substances for elimination.

This sophisticated filtration system faces additional challenges when stressed by factors such as high blood sugar, medications, or cold exposure. The final product - urine stored in the bladder until elimination - contains only waste products, with all valuable nutrients recovered.



Watch for frequent yawning or flehmen behavior - these might be signs of liver stress.

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOUR HORSE'S SYSTEM IS OVERWHELMED?

A Wide Range of Symptoms

Metabolic diseases caused by impaired liver and/or kidney function can manifest in numerous ways. These range from musculoskeletal problems to conditions like Cushing's, EMS, laminitis, insulin dysregulation, and KPU (Kryptopyrroluria). Skin issues such as mud fever or sweet itch may develop, along with allergies and immune system weakness, showing as frequent infections, slow wound healing, and parasite problems.

The Impact of Diet

When diet triggers metabolic overload, horses often also show digestive signs including fecal water, diarrhea, bloating, or tendency for colics, as well as restricted movement or willingness during training.

When to Take Action

Don't wait for blood work to show abnormal liver and kidney values - that's leaving it very late. Instead, watch for early warning signs of metabolic stress. If your horse shows any symptoms listed here, it's time to begin a detoxification and cleansing program. However, horses with existing metabolic conditions need professional guidance, as standard detox protocols may be too harsh for their compromised organs.

RECOGNIZING METABOLIC PROBLEMS IN YOUR HORSE

Liver and kidney issues typically reveal themselves through distinct signs. When your horse shows multiple early warning signs listed here, it's a strong indicator of underlying metabolic problems.

EARLY INDICATORS OF LIVER PROBLEMS

Scattered White Hairs: Single white hairs appearing in an otherwise normally pigmented coat.

Color Disturbances: Dark patches appearing in the coat, particularly visible on chestnut horses in the flank and croup areas. In black horses, this can create a brownish appearance.

Vertical Coat Lines: Two centimeter-spaced stripes running down the body from back to belly.

"Cat Hairs": Individual long hairs scattered through the normal coat, particularly noticeable in winter coat, especially on the belly and behind the carpal joints.

Eyes: Bluish cast, inflammation, excessive tearing.

Windgalls / Swellings: on Pasterns and Hock Joints.

Tendon and Ligament Issues: Ruptures and strains occurring without traumatic injury.

Body Condition: Weight loss, difficulty gaining weight, reduced appetite, feed aversion.

Performance Issues: Lack of fitness despite sufficient exercise.

Lethargy: Frequent yawning, flehmen response, lack of energy.

Abdomen: Drawn up and sensitive to touch.

Gut Issues: Frequent mild colics with unpleasant-smelling droppings.

EARLY INDICATORS OF KIDNEY PROBLEMS

Coat: Dull coat with hairs that end in a 'hook'-like tip.

Moulting: Slow or poor moulting, thin or insufficient winter coat.

Skin Conditions:

- Hypersensitive skin.
- Sweet itch and other eczema.
- Mallenders, phlegmon, or nettle rash.
- Hypersensitivity to insect bites, detergents, or allergens.
- Poor wound healing.
- Generalized itchiness.
- Increased tendency toward warts, sarcoids, skin fungi, or lice infestations.

Salt or Minerals:

Excessive consumption of salt or mineral licks.

Hoof Conditions:

Laminitis, hoof abscesses, or thrush.

Lymphatic System Disorders:

- Swelling in the legs after stall rest.
- Spongy swelling in hock or carpal joints.
- Firm, stiff neck crest.
- Lymphatic pads on the flanks or swelling in the sheath area.

Sweating:

- Abnormal sweating, including excessive or insufficient sweating.
- Hyperventilation caused by inadequate sweating.

Drinking and Urination:

- Excessive or insufficient water intake.
- Correspondingly, excessive or insufficient urination.



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WHAT CAN BE DONE FOR METABOLIC DISORDERS?

Change of Feed

For a horse with metabolic disorders, the first step should be optimizing the diet to include approximately 1.5–3 kg of low-sugar hay per 100 kg of body weight, along with a suitable mineral feed or ration balancer. Avoid feeding sugar, high protein levels, or oil at all costs. Additionally, carrots, chaff, beet pulp, and haylage should not be part of the diet. Any dietary changes should be made gradually over a period of four weeks. In some cases, a colon restoration may be necessary.

Detox Support

To support general detoxification, we recommend **OKAPI Spirulina** in either powder or pellet form. Spirulina binds with toxins, facilitating their elimination from the body.

How to Deal with Acidification?

In cases of hyperacidity of the connective tissue, a four-week course of **OKAPI Prodic** and **OKAPI Zinc Plus** is advised to enhance lymph drainage.

Please contact us before starting any therapy. We will be happy to connect you with a qualified therapist from the Sanoanimal network who can create an individualized treatment plan for your horse: office@sanoanimal.com.

Liver and Kidney Support

The liver can be specifically supported with **OKAPI Liver Support**, which contains concentrated plant-based silymarin. At the same time, **OKAPI Detox Herbs** can stimulate the kidneys and aid in waste excretion.

Important: Only administer **OKAPI Liver Support** if a detoxification disorder such as Kryptopyrroluria (KPU) has been ruled out.

For long-term support of liver and kidney function in horses with metabolic problems, a two-week rotation of **OKAPI Detox Herbs**, **OKAPI Bitter Herbs**, and **OKAPI Immuno Herbs** has proven effective. Alternatively, **OKAPI Four Seasons Feed** can be used to provide your horse with appropriate seasonal herbs throughout the year. This makes **OKAPI Four Seasons Feed** a healthy supplement or alternative to concentrated feed.

Supporting the Moulting Process

During the moulting process, additional support can be provided with **OKAPI Zinc Plus**, **OKAPI Sulphur Plus**, and **OKAPI Detox Herbs**. These help to alleviate the strain on kidney function during this demanding period.

