

A Healthy Autumn Treatment

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You feel it and your horses feel it even more. The increasingly cool breezes, crisp mornings, and fewer daylight hours all mean that autumn is here and winter is soon to come. In Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM), autumn is associated with the Metal Element in the Five-Element Theory. The Five-Element Theory metaphorically describes the seasonal transitions that occur as the earth rotates throughout the year. To maintain good health during the entire year, we have to be sure our life force energy, Chi, is in balance with each season.

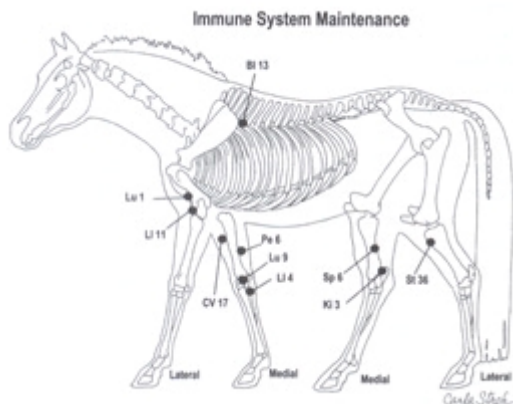
In the fall we have to protect the horse's body from dryness and increasing cold while also preparing for the long cold winter months. In the same way we harvest and store grain and hay for the winter, we need to help the horse retain and gather his Chi energy to endure the cold, north winter winds. The Metal Element is associated with the Lung and Large Intestine Meridians. To maintain optimal health throughout the fall and to ward off illness in the winter, we must make sure that both the Lung and Large Intestine Meridians are functioning properly and that Chi energy is flowing smoothly and harmoniously.

When there is weakness or an imbalance of the Lung and Large Intestine Meridians, your horse can have skin problems such as rain rot, eruptions, hives, or dry scaly skin. His coat can be scruffy looking and appear to be losing hair during the season when the horse's coat should be growing thicker and longer to protect him from the cold. Other signs of Chi imbalance along these meridians involve respiratory and digestive problems and infections such as: difficulty breathing, mucus discharge from the horse's nose, coughing, the extreme condition of strangles, diarrhea with undigested food, and other health issues.

External Chi meets internal Chi to create Gathering Chi, Zong Chi, in the horse's lungs every time he takes a breath. The lungs are responsible for dispersing the Chi that protects the surface of the body from external pathogens like wind, dryness, dampness, and cold. If the lungs and the Lung Meridian Chi are not functioning smoothly, the horse's health is compromised and the "evil" pathogens such as wind, dryness, and cold, can invade the body and cause illness. To fight against these pathogenic states, Gathering Chi mixes with Nutrient Chi, Ying Chi, in the chest to create Protective Chi, Wei Chi.

According to TCM thought, the Lung Meridian then sends the Protective Chi out to the surface of the body to control the skin, pores, skin hair, and the healthy balance of moisture. If there is an imbalance or blockage of Chi energy along the Lung Meridian, the Protective Chi will not be able to do its job of blocking cold or wind from entering the body, thus respiratory, skin, and digestive issues may appear in many different forms.

To improve and sustain your horse's Metal "armor" this autumn we suggest offering your horse an Autumn Maintenance Treatment on a regular basis over the next few months. By performing this Maintenance Treatment twice a week you will:



- Stimulate his vital immune system
- Improve his overall attitude
- Maintain his energy balance
- Establish a deeper bond with him
- Enhance his performance during this season
- Lower his physical and emotional stress level

POINT	TRADITIONAL NAME	FUNCTION
Lu1	Central Palace	Eliminates heat. Use for coughs or chest pains.
Lu9	Greater Abyss	Influential Point for arteries and veins. Resolves phlegm, regulates Lung Chi and helps stop coughs.
St36	Leg Three Miles	Tonification Point. Strengthens the immune system and benefits digestion. Master Point for the abdomen and gastrointestinal tract.
Bl13	Lung Transporting	Use for lung problems including congestion, asthma or bronchitis. Strengthens lung Chi.
CV17	Middle of the Chest	Influential Point for the respiratory system and Chi. Benefits breathing. Use for chronic coughs, resolves phlegm from the lungs.
LI4	Joining Valley	Strengthens the immune system and Protective Chi
LI11	Pond on the Curve	Benefits the immune system and relieves diarrhea. Often used in the treatment of allergic and infectious disorders.
Pe6	Inner Gate	Master Point for chest and front part of the abdomen. Regulates blood and Chi of the heart.
Ki3	Greater Stream	Restores and rebuilds the immune system. Nourishes Kidney yin, anchors the Chi and benefits the lungs.

Additionally, take this opportunity to observe your horse's condition analytically. Record your observations in a log-book to create a baseline of information about him. Assess his coat, skin, dental, and hoof conditions. Is he reactive or sensitive to a specific acupressure point? How is his overall muscle tone? Are there areas of his body that are cooler or hotter than others? Is he mentally alert and able to focus? Is his eye bright? Is he stiff or demonstrating any weakness or unevenness in gate?

Make notes in your logbook regarding his current condition and any concerns you have after each treatment session. Remember to check back in your notes to see if there are changes in your horse's condition. You will be able to determine your horse's progress or issues by keeping this information for each session. Your logbook may prove useful if you need to contact your vet and he or she has any questions regarding his prior condition.

The Autumn Maintenance Treatment is specifically designed to help your horse be as healthy as possible during the fall, and prepare his body for harsh and extreme winter weather. Please review the chart and enjoy knowing that you are helping to protect him this season.