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YOUR HORSE

Perfect partners
The science behind
your bond revealed

GET THE BEST FROM YOUR HORSE

APRIL 2015
£3.99

Get inside his MIND

Learn to think like your horse & train him like a pro

Rein aids explained

How you can improve your contact *today*

5 EASY WAYS to protect your horse's health



Feel confident on every hack

BODY PROTECTORS

Our guide to life-saving gear

TOP TIPS

MARY KING

helps you plan personalised schooling sessions that work

+ YOUR 16-PAGE
GUIDE TO BUYING
& SELLING HORSES



Monitor his health through your grooming



SUE PALMER

Equine physiotherapist

www.thehorsephysio.co.uk

In days gone by, grooms strapped each horse in their care for up to an hour every day. Today, we often rush to fit riding in around work, family and social life, meaning grooming is cut short and generally has the singular aim of your horse being clean enough to ride. So this year, could you adjust your schedule to include at least one

thorough grooming session for your horse each week?

Begin with brushes, finish by using your hands and take at least an hour from start to finish. Listen to your horse by observing his reaction to your touch - if he flinches, puts his ears back or swishes his tail it could indicate discomfort, so contact your local chartered physiotherapist (www.acpat.co.uk) for a visit. Feel for heat, swelling or sensitivity, always comparing left with right. Work slowly to cover every inch of your horse, including his face, chest and between his legs. Use your hands as a tool to get to know your horse's body.

It's only by knowing what's usual that you know what's unusual. Think of your time as an investment in your horse's health and



Make proper grooming a key part of his care this year

performance, as essential as riding lessons, farrier visits and dental checks.

● **Find out more with my Horse Massage for Horse Owners book or DVD, or one-to-one courses available from www.thehorsephysio.co.uk**

Make one change

With so much advice out there on what's best for your horse, we've cut to the chase by asking five equine health professionals about single the most important things you can do to protect his wellbeing. From teeth to toes, we've got all the info you need

Maintain your horse at a healthy weight



DR TERESA HOLLANDS

Equine nutritionist

bit.ly/1zWEzyw

If you knew that 80% of ponies and 25% of horses in the UK have a chronic, low grade, systemic inflammatory disease¹, if

you knew this disease increases their risk of skin, muscular and respiratory diseases, reduces reproductive function, puts them at increased risk of dying under anaesthetic and of suffering from laminitis², you'd want to do something about it, wouldn't you? But only 35% of us recognise this disease³. It affects people too; 30% of the world's population (2.1 billion people) has been diagnosed. If your horse was a human, the EU would consider him disabled.

By now you'll have worked out that this

chronic, low grade, systemic inflammatory disease is commonly known as being overweight. The good news is this condition is preventable, so if your horse is at risk because he's a good doer, is comfortably cuddly or laid-back, you can protect him by using this checklist:

- 1** Ensure he's eating enough bulk whilst controlling calories, so know the energy value of what he eats. Feeding hay (10kg = 80MJ of energy) rather than straw (10kg = 50MJ) means your horse is eating 30MJ of extra energy every day - the same as three scoops of a leisure mix (or 7,170 human calories).
- 2** Make sure his fat score across his body is three by checking him fortnightly. Learn how here: bit.ly/1Aw8gvO
- 3** Ride, lunge or lead for 30 minutes a day, six days a week, to increase his heart rate to 80bpm.
- 4** Turn him out wearing a muzzle rather than leaving him stabled.
- 5** Balance his diet with a vitamin and mineral supplement or balancer.

1 SALONE ET AL, 2009 RVC 2 CARTER ET AL, 2004 3 IRELAND ET AL, 2014



Regular weight taping and fat scoring will help you keep tabs on whether he's the right weight