



# Horse Treatment Therapies

There is so much confusion on when to use the different alternative therapies so hoping this will help. All can be useful in some ways and some therapies suit some horses better than others.

THERAPY	DESCRIPTION	TREATS	Type of Conditions	PROS	CONS
Massage	Equine massage therapy involves the application of hands-on techniques to manipulate the muscles, soft tissues, and joints of the horse. It aims to alleviate muscle tension, improve circulation, promote relaxation, and enhance overall well-being.	Muscle Soft Tissue Joints All body systems Range of Movement	Muscular tension/ soreness/ stiffness, Post-exercise fatigue, General stress relief Injury Recovery Pre/Post Competition	Promotes relaxation, relieves muscle tension, improves flexibility and range of motion, enhances circulation, aids in recovery from injuries, and can improve the horse's overall performance. Can assist all the body systems directly and non invasive.	Requires training and knowledge of equine anatomy. Not a substitute for veterinary care for underlying medical conditions and can not be performed at some contraindications. Should be performed by a qualified and experienced equine massage therapist.
Acupuncture	Acupuncture involves the insertion of thin needles into specific points on the horse's body, stimulating nerves and promoting the flow of energy (known as Qi). This therapy is based on traditional Chinese medicine principles and aims to restore balance and harmony within the body.	Musculoskeletal Soft tissue Joints Body Systems Emotional Behavioral Range of Movement	Musculoskeletal pain Lameness Digestive disorders Respiratory issues Behavioral problems, Emotional issues Muscle issues	Non-invasive, drug-free approach. Can alleviate pain, improve circulation, promote relaxation, and enhance overall well-being.	Requires a trained and licensed acupuncturist. In some states it can only be performed by a vet. Not all horses may respond positively.
Red Light Therapy	Red light therapy utilizes specific wavelengths of light	Musculoskeletal Soft tissue	Wounds Muscle injuries	Non-invasive, painless, and promotes tissue	

(Photonic)	to penetrate the skin and stimulate cellular activity. It promotes ATP production, improves blood circulation, and accelerates healing. It also aids with anti-inflammatory effects.	Joints Body Systems Emotional Behavioral Range of Movement	Arthritis Inflammation Pain relief Some skin conditions Rehab Preventive	healing and cellular regeneration. Can be used for specific areas or over a larger area. Can be done by a veterinarian or trained therapist.	
Physical Therapy	Equine physical therapy involves various techniques such as therapeutic exercises, stretching, massage, hydrotherapy, and the use of modalities like ultrasound and laser therapy. It focuses on improving mobility, reducing inflammation, and promoting healing.	Muscle Soft Tissue Joints All body systems Range of Movement	Musculoskeletal injuries Post-surgical recovery Joint issues Lameness	Promotes healing, improves range of motion, strengthens muscles, reduces pain, and aids in recovery from injuries.	Requires specialized training, equipment, and facilities. May not be suitable for all conditions or horses.
Reiki	Reiki is a holistic therapy that involves the channeling of universal energy through the practitioner's hands. The practitioner places their hands on or near the horse's body to facilitate energy flow, balance chakras, and promote relaxation and emotional well-being.	Muscle Mind Body Systems Energy	Stress Anxiety Emotional imbalances Overall wellness.	Non-invasive, promotes relaxation, stress reduction, and overall well-being. Can be performed by a trained Reiki practitioner.	Results may vary among individuals.
PEMF (Pulse Electromagnetic Field)	PEMF therapy involves the application of electromagnetic fields to the horse's body. These fields penetrate tissues and stimulate cellular activity,	Skeletal System Joints Muscles	Bone fractures Soft tissue injuries Arthritis Inflammation Pain relief.	Non-invasive, painless, and promotes tissue healing, reduces inflammation, and enhances overall well-being. Can be used on	Requires specialized equipment. Multiple sessions may be needed. Not suitable for all conditions or horses.

	promoting healing, reducing inflammation, and improving circulation.			specific areas or over a larger area. Can be done by a veterinarian or trained therapist.	
Bowen Therapy	Bowen therapy involves the application of gentle rolling movements and light touches to specific points on the horse's body. It aims to stimulate the body's own healing response, restore balance, and promote relaxation.	Musculoskeletal	Musculoskeletal issues Pain Tension Stiffness Some neurological conditions.	Non-invasive, gentle, and can promote relaxation, pain relief, and improved mobility. Can be performed by a qualified Bowen therapist.	Results may vary among individuals. Requires a trained practitioner.
Laser Therapy	Laser therapy involves the use of a focused beam of light to penetrate the skin and stimulate cellular activity. It promotes tissue repair, increases blood circulation, and reduces inflammation, resulting in pain relief and accelerated healing. Note there are different levels and some have a form of non-ionising radiation.	Muscles	Soft tissue injuries Wounds Arthritis Inflammation Musculoskeletal pain Some dermatological conditions.	Non-invasive, painless, and promotes tissue healing and pain reduction. Can be used on specific areas or over a larger area. Can be done by a veterinarian or trained therapist.	Requires specialized equipment. Multiple sessions may be needed. Not suitable for all conditions or horses.