

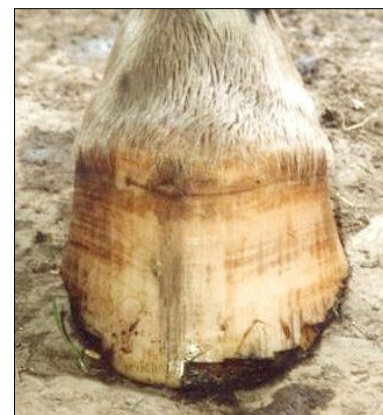


## Problems after removing the shoes

Knowing what can possibly happen after you remove the shoes is often very helpful. That does not mean it always does happen, but just to be on the safe and educated side, here are all possibilities presented.

### 1.) Poor horn quality - wall breaks

The wall horn on a shod horse is not very strong and especially compromised in the areas where the nails were. This very inferior horn may not be able to stand up to regular wear. If there are no other problems and the owner wants to continue to ride, boots may be needed for this transition period. A new hoofcapsule will have grown down completely within 8 - 10 months, sometimes even sooner. The new growth will be stronger and more resilient. If the corium was damaged in the hoof, it may take longer to grow a strong hoofcapsule. The new hoof capsule will reach the ground first in the heel region, the toe takes longer to grow out.



### 2.) Hoof flexion

When circulation returns into the hoof, nerves can function again. This **may** result in pain.

Possible causes of pain:

- the blood rushing into the hoof
- paired with inflammation
- restored circulation is painful
- the horse now can feel the damage that exists in his hooves
- expansion of the hoof - stretching of the corium
- stretching of the skin above the bulbs
- lateral cartilages are forced to adapt
- abscessing may occur as part of the healing process

All this after circulation is introduced to the hoof in full force

### 3.) Local Infections

When very poor horn quality is present, cracks and fractures in the sole and bars can cause local infections. These can go all the way into the corium.

### 4.) Trimming Errors

When circulation and feeling are restored to the hoof, trimming errors like

- excess horn
  - bars not trimmed back properly
  - heel points trimmed conventionally
- become quickly apparent.



## 5.) Existing Damage

In horses who have been shod tight and incorrectly for a long time, the laminar connection between the coffin bone and the hoof capsule may be so compromised that the attachment is non-existent. Removing the shoe and giving the hoof flexibility allows the sole to flatten upon weight bearing. The sole is no longer held in a vaulted position by the nailed on shoe. The vaulted sole may have been the only thing that kept the coffinbone in position. Once this "support" is removed, the coffinbone may rotate or sink deeper into the hoofcapsule or both. While the coffinbone can re-suspend, this too is a matter of time and takes a minimum of 6 months under ideal circumstances (rubber floor and lots of movement).

**This is really a huge issue and often can be prevented by only trimming minimally or not at all after shoe removal. By not introducing a lot flexibility into the hoof capsule, you may be able to establish first a better coffin bone suspension and later trim the hoof to correct specifications. This is a matter of experience and such far reaching trimming decisions need to be made on a case-to-case basis.**

## 6.) Muscular adjustment

As the hoof form changes through the removal of the shoe, muscular tension may occur throughout the body.

Physiotherapy (massage, acupuncture, chiropractic, acupressure, cranio-sacral therapy, etc.) is indicated to help the horse through this transition period.

## 7.) Organ Damage

Inner organs may become damaged through the onslaught of toxins expelled into the body with increased circulation

## Conclusion

While all of this sounds very harsh, it is listed here to make sure that you cover all the possibilities with the owner.

Make sure that s/he understands what can happen and why it may happen. Work with a very compromised horse in very small steps.

**\*Provide a holistic detoxification program.**

**\*Remove the hind shoes first and let the horse get used to just two bare hooves.**

**\*Remove the front shoes 4 weeks later.**

**\*Do not trim the same for another 4 weeks.**

**\*All the while supplying the horse with nutritional support and detoxification.**