



7 Hidden Signs Your Horse May Be Compensating

A Simple Self-Check for Horse Owners

Most horses don't go from feeling great to suddenly becoming lame.

More often, they begin making subtle adjustments to stay comfortable. These compensation patterns can develop long before obvious pain or lameness appears.

Use this guide to see if your horse is showing any of these common signs.

- **Your horse bends noticeably easier one direction than the other.**

One side feels soft and supple, while the other always feels stiff or resistant.

This can indicate:

- Uneven muscle tension
- Restricted mobility
- Protective movement patterns

□ **Your horse doesn't like standing square.**

Do they consistently:

- Rest the same leg?
- Camp under behind?
- Camp out in front?
- Stand with one hind leg farther underneath their body?

These postural habits often develop because standing evenly isn't comfortable.

□ **Uneven muscle development.**

Have you noticed:

- One shoulder appears larger than the other?
- One hip looks higher?
- One side of the neck is more developed?

Muscles tell the story of how your horse has been moving over time.

□ **Small behavioral changes.**

Compensation doesn't always look like lameness.

Sometimes it looks like:

- Pinning ears during grooming or saddling
- Girthiness
- Difficulty picking up one lead
- Resistance to collection
- Tail swishing
- Becoming less willing to move forward

Behavior is communication. Small Changes are often your horse's first way of telling you something doesn't feel right.

□ **Your horse struggles with balance.**

You may notice that they:

- Fall in on circles
- Lean through turns
- Trip more often
- Feel heavy on one rein

These can be signs of compensation - not simply training issues.

□ **The same tightness keeps coming back.**

Have you noticed your horse feels amazing for a few days after bodywork...

...then gradually returns to the same areas of stiffness?

That doesn't necessarily mean the bodywork didn't work.

It may mean the underlying movement pattern hasn't changed yet, so the body falls back into the same compensation pattern.

□ **Something just doesn't feel right.**

Sometimes owners can't explain it.

They simply know:

“My horse isn't lame, but they aren't moving like themselves.”

Trust your instinct on this.

You know your horse better than anyone.

Your Results

0 - 2 boxes checked

Continue monitoring your horse and watch for changes over time.

3 - 4 boxes checked

Your horse may be developing compensation patterns that deserve a closer look.

5 or more boxes checked

Your horse may benefit from a comprehensive deep tension/nervous system led assessment to help identify the restrictions and compensation patterns contributing to what you're seeing.

Why Compensation Happens

Horses are incredibly good at adapting.

When one area becomes uncomfortable or restricted, they naturally shift their movement to protect it.

Over time, those protective patterns become their “new normal.”

Eventually, the compensation itself can create additional tension, imbalance, reduced performance, and discomfort, even if the original issue has improved.

That's why simply treating sore muscles doesn't always create lasting change.

My Approach

At **Equine Unwind Therapeutics**, I don't just look for where your horse is tight.

I look for **why** that tension developed in the first place.

My **Foundation Series** is designed to identify hidden compensation patterns while helping improve posture, movement, strength, and overall comfort through:

- ✓ Deep tension and nervous system-led bodywork.
- ✓ Through posture & movement assessment.
- ✓ Personalized corrective exercises.

- ✓ Polework recommendations.
- ✓ Supportive therapies, such as PEMF and kinesiology taping.

The goal isn't temporary relief.

It's helping your horse move better by addressing both the tension **and** the movement patterns contributing to it.

My **Ongoing Care Memberships** provide consistent deep tension/nervous system-led bodywork, PEMF therapy and personalized movement recommendations to help maintain progress and support long-term comfort.

Ready to Learn What's Really Going On?

If several of these signs felt familiar, your horse may be compensating in ways that aren't immediately obvious.

The Foundation Series is designed to uncover those hidden patterns, release areas of restriction, evaluate posture & movement, and create a plan to help your horse move more comfortably and confidently.

Ready to create a plan for your horse?

If you are located in **Arizona**, contact **EquineUnwindTherapeutics.com** to get started.

