



9 Ways to Take Control of Arthritis & Get your Horse Back

Hi!

I'm Ciara

(pronounced Keira if you'd like to know)



If you're anything like me, we both have horses in our soul. I grew up with no equestrian background in my family, but somehow the bug just found me and I was obsessed as a child, then teenager, now I have to admit, still as an adult. I still get excited when I'm driving and see horses in a field -even when I'm on my way to work with horses all day (how silly is that?!).

Unfortunately, what comes with the territory, is that our beloved friends break down. Quite a lot. They'll find a way to get hurt in a padded cell. And one of the most common problems is Osteoarthritis. I bet you felt your heart sink when your Vet said that word. You have a horse because you love them, but you shouldn't have to live with this constant worry and stress. What do you do now? Can you still enjoy your time together?

I'm here to help your concerns. I am a Veterinary & Chartered Physiotherapist, with 13 years of qualified experience treating Osteoarthritis. As well as the conveyor belt of NHS patients, I've run many group classes for people dealing with their symptoms, and have treated copious horses & ponies with the condition. I want you to feel confident that you're doing all the right things, and want to help them live their best quality of life.

Here are 9 simple but vital things you can do, to make sure you're giving them everything you can.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'C. Glaisher'.

Ciara Glaisher

ACPAT Chartered Physiotherapist

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Horse/pony's Name:	
Which joint(s) diagnosed with OA:	
Today's Date:	



Your key actions Checklist...

Farrier

Is your farrier aware of the arthritis diagnosis?
They could have a trick up their sleeve to help

 Yes No

Weight

Do you use a Weigh Tape and Body Condition
Score every 2 weeks?
(In addition to accurate Weigh Bridge
every 3-6 months)

 Yes No

Diet

Is your horse's diet optimised?

 Yes No

MSK Therapist

Do you have a qualified, registered Physiotherapist or Osteopath for regular treatments and advice?

 Yes No

Pain medication

Have you discussed with your Vet the pros and cons of pain relief options?

 Yes No

Exercise Programme

Do you a programme for ridden and ground exercises, specifically prescribed for your horse?

 Yes No

Log discomfort

Do you keep a log or diary of your horse's signs of pain or discomfort?

 Yes No

Plan

Do you have a plan of action for flare ups?

Yes

No

Understand

Do you know what Osteoarthritis actually is?
Understanding the process puts you in a much better place
to make the *right decisions* for your horse's treatment

Yes

No

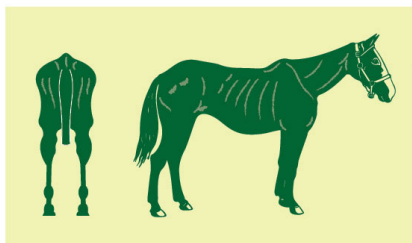
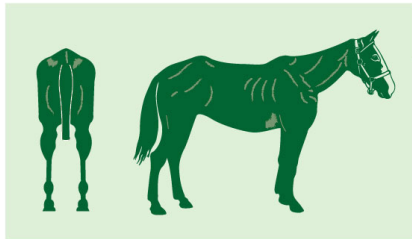
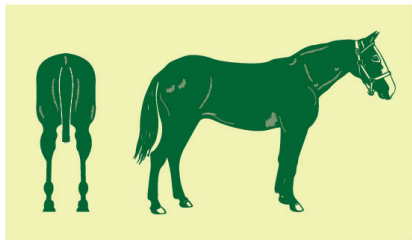
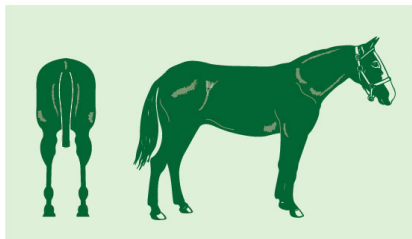
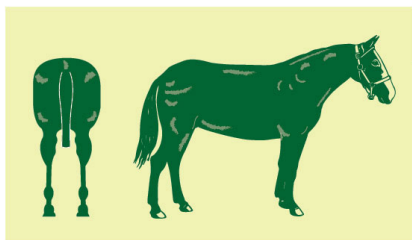
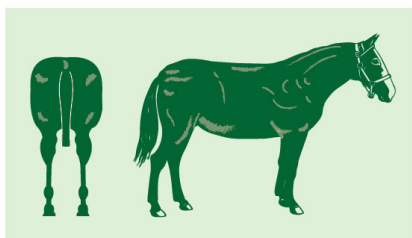
Tools required

Tool	For	Where it is
Weigh tape, Body Condition Scoring chart	Monitoring weight regularly, to ensure seasonal changes don't pile on too many pounds	Weigh tape: (?in grooming kit) BCS Chart: BHS website & Dengie's chart attached below for your convenience
Diary	Keeping track of appointments with farrier, Physio/Osteo, Vet. Plus logging BCS/weight, exercise diary, pain/discomfort tracking	Specialised <i>Problems & Plans</i> diary journal available here; Problems & Plans Diary
Qualified independent Equine Dietician contact details	Ensuring horse's weight is managed well and getting all nutrients needed	[In P&P diary, along with spaces for all other contacts]
Other (Add any of your own equipment that you use to help manage your horse's arthritis)		

Body Condition Scoring (credit to Dengie feeds)

FAT SCORE CHART

Use the following guide to help you ascertain if your horse or pony is over weight. If you're not sure why not take a photo from the side and the rear then send them to our nutrition team who will be happy to help you? Make sure you score your horse or pony regularly to ensure you spot changes early.

	<h3>0 - EMACIATED</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• No fatty tissue can be felt• Skin tight over bones• Shape of individual bones visible• Marked ewe-neck• Very prominent backbone and pelvis• Very sunken rump• Deep cavity under tail• Large gap between thighs
	<h3>1 - THIN</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Barely any fatty tissue• Skin more supple• Shape of bones visible• Narrow ewe-neck• Ribs easily visible• Prominent backbone, croup and tailhead• Sunken rump; cavity under tail• Gap between thighs
	<h3>2 - LEAN</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A thin layer of fat under the skin• Narrow neck; muscles sharply defined• Backbone covered with a very thin layer of fat but still protruding• Withers, shoulders and neck accentuated• Ribs just visible• Hip bones easily visible but rounded• Rump usually sloping flat from backbone to point of hips, may be rounded if very fit• May be small gap between thighs
	<h3>3 - MODERATE</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A thin layer of fat under the skin• Top line developing and becoming more rounded• Withers rounded over tips of bones• Shoulders and neck blend smoothly into body• Back is flat or forms only slight ridge• Ribs not visible but easily felt• Thin layer of fat building around tailhead• Rump beginning to appear rounded• Hip bones just visible
	<h3>4 - FAT</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Muscles hard to determine beneath fat layer• Spongy fat developing on crest• Fat deposits along withers, behind shoulders and along neck• Ribs covered by spongy fat• Rump well rounded• Spongy fat around tailhead• Gutter along back• From behind rump looks apple shaped
	<h3>5 - OBESE</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Horse takes on a blocky, bloated look• Muscles not visible as covered by layer of fat• Pronounced crest with hard fat• Pads of fat along withers and behind shoulders• Extremely obvious gutter along back and rump• Flank filled in flush• Lumps of fat around tailhead• Very bulging apple shaped rump• Inner thighs pressing together

Need some help ticking all the 'Yes' boxes?

Not sure why each one is important, or if it would make a difference?

I'm here to help you and your horse!

Have a look at my online resource, designed for people that care about their equine friend and want to do everything they can to minimise their suffering. People like you.

The Arthritis Answer Vault



Just click the following link:

[***Merlin VP Answers***](#)

