

## The Ridden Horse Pain Ethogram

The *Ridden Horse Pain Ethogram* (RHpE) developed by Dr. Sue Dyson, is a scientifically validated tool designed to identify subtle signs of pain in ridden horses. The book, *Harmonious Horsemanship* provides an accessible and evidence-based approach to using the RHpE, coauthored by Dr Sue Dyson and Sue Palmer MCSP available online.

<https://www.thehorsephysio.co.uk/harmonious-horsemanship/>

Behaviour	Tick if present	Comments
1. Repeated changes of head position (up/down), not in rhythm with the trot		
2. Head tilted or tilting repeatedly		
3. Head in front of vertical (>300) for ≥10 s		
4. Head behind vertical (>100) for ≥10 s		
5. Head position changes regularly, tossed or twisted from side to side, corrected constantly		
6. Ears rotated back behind vertical or flat (both or one only) ≥5 s; repeatedly lay flat		
7. Eye lids closed, or half closed for 2-5 s; frequent blinking		
8. Sclera exposed repeatedly		
9. Intense stare (glazed expression, 'zoned out') for ≥5s		
10. Mouth opening ± shutting repeatedly with separation of teeth, for ≥10 s		
11. Tongue exposed, protruding or hanging out and/or moving in and out repeatedly		

12. Bit pulled through the mouth on one side (left or right), repeatedly		
13. Tail clamped tightly to middle or held to one side		
14. Tail swishing large movements: repeatedly up and down/side to side/ circular; repeatedly during transitions		
15. A rushed gait (frequency of trot steps > 40/15 s); irregular rhythm in trot or canter; repeated changes of speed in trot or canter		
16. Gait too slow (frequency of trot steps <35/15 s); passage-like trot		
17. Hindlimbs do not follow tracks of forelimbs but repeatedly deviated to left or right; on 3 tracks in trot or canter		
18. Canter repeated leg changes in front and/or behind; repeated strike off on wrong leg; disunited		
19. Spontaneous changes of gait (e.g. breaks from canter to trot, or trot to canter)		
20. Stumbles or trips more than once; repeated bilateral hindlimb toe drag		
21. Sudden change of direction, against rider's cues; spooking		
22. Reluctance to move forwards (has to be kicked ± verbal encouragement), stops spontaneously		
23. Rearing (both forelimbs off the ground)		
24. Bucking or kicking backwards (one or both)		