

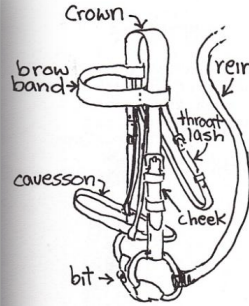


Body Awareness Module

Exercise is vital to the health of all body systems.

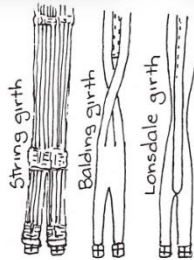
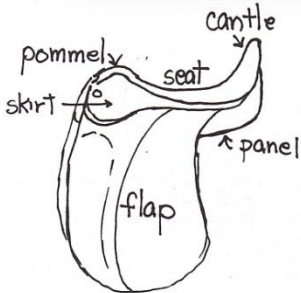
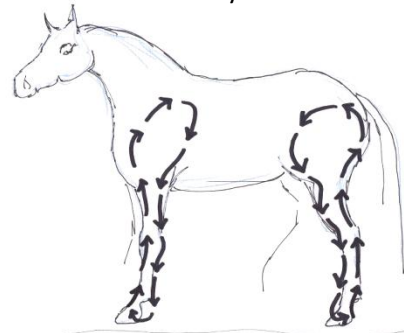
You can bond with and exercise your horse with work in-hand (leading, longeing, free work) and under saddle. Choose the minimal amount of equipment; the least severity and connect heart to heart with breathing and by saying your horse's name often.

Equipment that we use on a horse will contact and influence **Meridian** (energy) lines and points in the body. If pressure is put upon a meridian, the corresponding organ can be negatively impacted. Ulcers in the stomach are often associated with girth pressure. Saddle panel pressure can irritate the bladder meridian. It is not just the muscles that feel pressures.



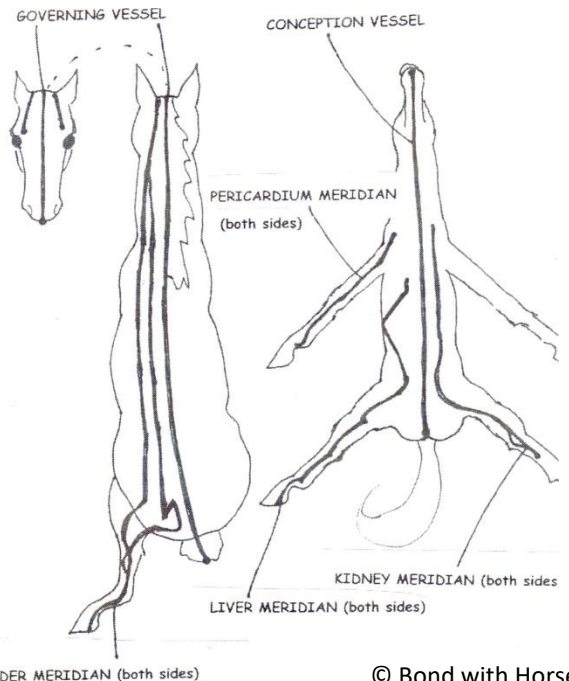
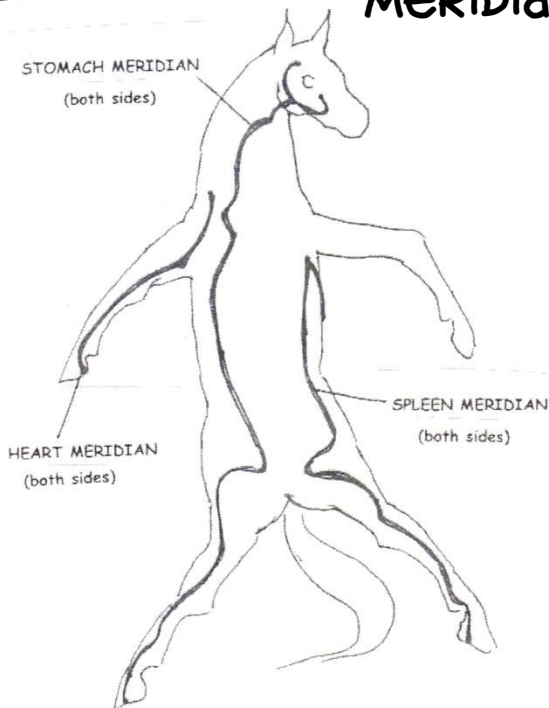
The body benefits from movement; the mind benefits from stillness

Blood, Lymph and Energy flow up and down the legs; from hoof to shoulder and hoof to hip. Movement is necessary. Comfort is the key.



Consider all of the points at which your **equipment** touches the horse's body. Padding, fleece covers and perfect fit will create the possibility of comfort – allowing the horse to concentrate on your relationship.

MERIDIANS

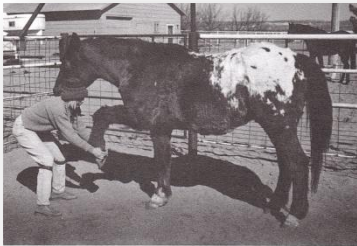




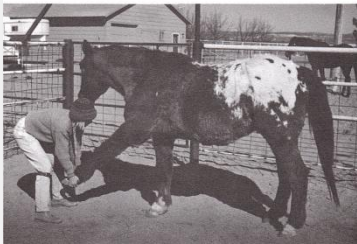
Body Awareness Module

- Activate the horse's mind. He is always learning something, make it positive.
- Build a foundation of relaxation.
- Establish everything at the walk.
- Stretch the outside of the horse to bend instead of contracting the inside.
- Underdeveloped muscles tire quickly.
- Overworked muscles hurt.

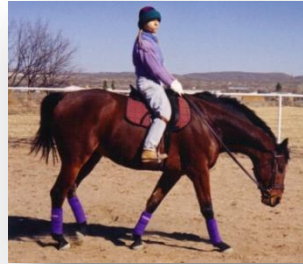
Allowing the horse to stretch loosens muscles, tendons and ligaments:



Retraction



Protraction



Muscles support each other. Imagine holding a heavy box up without relief; you tire quickly and muscles start to ache. Your horse feels this, too, when he works in collection for long periods of time without relief. We call it "refreshing" the horse – allowing him to stretch through his body often to relax muscles and return to an exercise without stiffness or pain. It is like "horse yoga". Just as the tree with deep roots and flexible branches can weather a storm – the horse with strength and suppleness can dance with you.

You can massage muscles that become tight:

The horse's blood flow within vessels feeds his muscles. We must girth up slowly and release girth pressure gradually before removing the saddle, letting blood return slowly to his back.

MUSCULAR SYSTEM

A MUSCLE NEVER WORKS AS A SINGLE, LONE UNIT

STATIC WORK fatigues rapidly

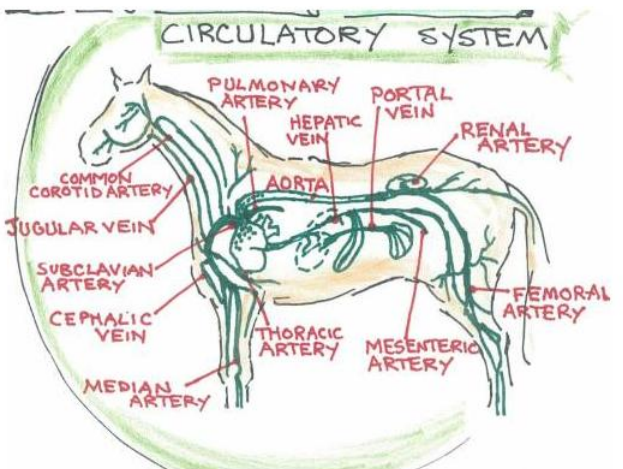
ACTIVE WORK ensures circulatory assistance

ADDUCTORS - prevent limbs from falling outward

ABDUCTORS - prevent limbs from falling inward

1. RECTUS CAPITUS
2. MASTOIDO-HUMERALIS > gentle finger massage
3. SUPRASPINATUS > knead gently
4. INFRASPINATUS > knead gently
5. TRICEPS - deep kneading
6. PECTORALIS - knead gently
7. TRAPEZIUS - knead
8. LONGISSIMUS > gentle kneading
- 8A LATTISSIMUS
9. GLUTEUS MEDIUS - deep kneading
10. TENSOR-FASCIA LATA - knead
11. LONG VASTUS - knead / wring / finger massage
12. SEMITENDINOSUS - knead / wring
13. GASTROCNEMIUS > finger massage
14. MEDIAL PATELLA > finger massage

© Bond with Horses





Body Awareness Module

Legs and Hooves are the horse's foundation.

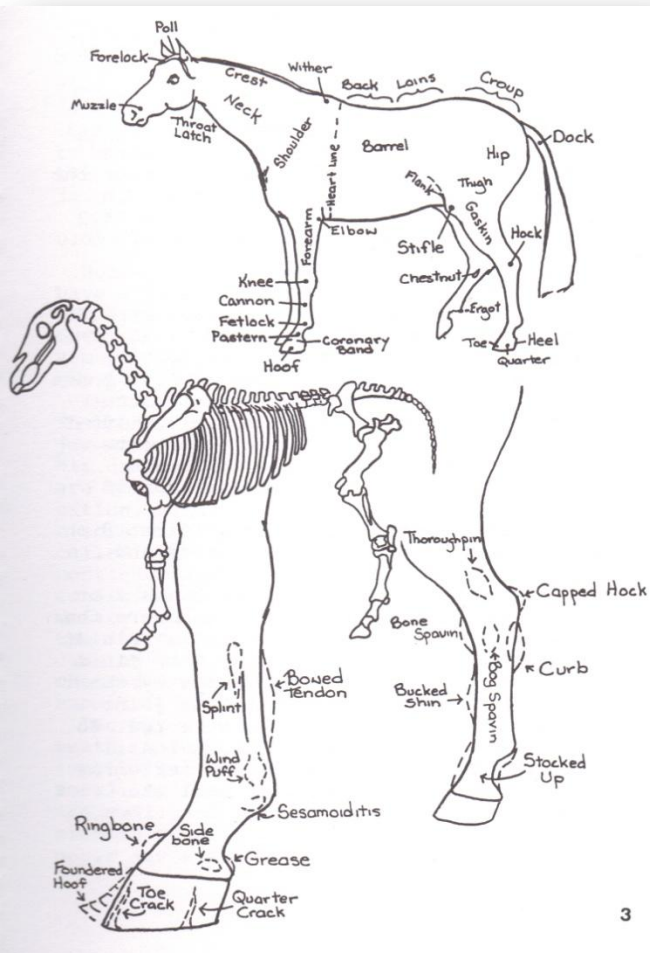
The horse's body is supported by four legs that are essentially "digits" – each leg is like one of our fingers.

Awareness of the physical structure of the leg and hoof will help you keep the horse sound. When he works for you, do not make sudden, violent movements that cause him to "catch" his balance and twist his legs.

His hooves are flexible, dynamic structures meant to contact the ground and help pump blood back up his legs with every footfall. His joints are wrapped in ligaments and tendons and kept articulated by synovial fluid, acting as a lubricant.

Pain will cause reticence, always look for reasons when a horse changes behavior or resists when handled or ridden.

Movement is essential to good health. The horse's organs "hang" from his spine (unlike bipeds whose organs are "stacked") and he needs to have freedom of movement throughout the day and night. This will keep heart, lungs and digestive organs healthy. He depends upon his legs and hooves for the instinctive ability to flee from predators and foals are standing within minutes of birth to be able to move with their herd.



Lower Leg bones are intricately constructed and depend upon each other. The coffin bone of the hoof is filled with blood vessels and can be detrimentally affected by concussion, stress, changes in diet, chemicals and toxins.



The healthy bare hoof will "tell" us what is needed to support the legs and body of the horse.

It is more important how the hoof functions and how the horse feels than how things look.

