



Christine Scully on

Hay Fever, Seasonal Allergy,

Allergic Rhinitis

Seasonal Allergies are relatively common in horses and ponies, however with early recognition, identification and removal of the allergen most cases can be resolved. There are cases where the allergen cannot be removed, and in this case we need to provide good management aimed at reducing the discomfort of the horse, and the subsequent drop in performance.

Signs of seasonal allergy may include:

- * Clear nasal discharge and sneezing, often seasonal.
- * Clear discharge from eyes may occur
- * May be accompanied by shaking of the head.
- * Swollen glands around the head

Horses may be allergic to moulds, bedding or feed. Chemical infiltration from nearby roads, or herbicides and pesticides may also cause allergies.

The Oak and Beech trees are common causes of allergy in the summer months, and various pollens have been identified as allergens in spring.

As chronic obstructive pulmonary disease is thought to have its beginning in respiratory allergies, it is important to recognise the signs and take appropriate steps to reduce the onset of symptoms.

Natural Therapies

1. Husbandry

- * Remove from exposure to allergen, or if possible remove allergen.
- * Avoid dusty environments and dampen feed to reduce dust inhalation
- * Excess cereals and high nitrogen containing feeds can increase discharge and mucous production, thus try to avoid excess grain, lucerne or clover in the diet. Adequate roughage should still be provided.



2. Remedies

- * Provide a cleansing diet:
- * Provide **garlic** in feed twice per day leading up to and during times of risk.
- * A mixture of **brown sugar and onion** three times per day will assist to clear nasal passages and sinuses. Chop an onion, cover with brown sugar and allow to stand overnight, then provide a tablespoon full of the fluid each dose.
- * **Massage** of nasal passages, sinuses and tear ducts may be of assistance.



- * **Aniseed** may reduce nasal discharge
- * **Marshmallow Leaf** is used to soothe and protect the airways, use prior to and during danger period.
- * **Buckwheat** contains natural antihistamines, and is used when the horse displays significant discomfort

Many other herbs including nettles, peppermint and liquorice are also used in the management of allergic rhinitis. Tissue Salts and Homoeopathy may also be of benefit. Remember to call your vet should your horse be distressed by symptoms.

I hope the above information is useful in providing relief for your affected equine friend, and please do not hesitate to contact me if you need further assistance.

Until next time take care of yourselves and your equine friends. *Christine*

Christine delivers professional massage, acupuncture, rehabilitation, nutrition and natural equine health management. Principal of the Australian College of Animal Tactile Therapy, Christine works to a strict code of ethics which focuses on optimal care and respect for all animals.