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COLLOIDAL SILVER: WORTH CONSIDERING

by Cindy Daigre

Ten months after his life-threatening battle with EPM, Haley stands proud, with colloidal silver as part of his daily routine to help support his immune system.



What is Colloidal Silver?

A colloid is a mixture containing ultramicroscopic particles of one substance distributed evenly throughout another substance, such as in milk, fog, blood and paint for example. The particles are smaller than those in a suspension but larger than those in a solution. Colloidal silver is pure elemental silver that is evenly distributed throughout steam distilled water.

Colloidal silver is a result of the positive electrical charge that is attached to each particle of silver as it flakes off of the silver electrode into the water. The silver particles that are dispersed are between one nanometer to one micron in size. Mild silver protein and silver salts are not true colloidal silver.

The Environmental Protection Agency's studies on silver estimate the amount of silver intake required to be at risk for argyria (a medically benign but permanent bluish-gray discoloration of the skin from ingesting silver salts) is 3.8 to 6 grams of silver. One teaspoon of 5 ppm colloidal silver contains about 25 micrograms of silver, or .025 milligrams of silver. Argyria results from the deposition of silver in the dermis and also from silver-induced production of melanin. While argyria occurred more commonly before the development of antibiotics, it is now a rare occurrence.¹

Uses for Colloidal Silver

Colloidal silver can be a very beneficial natural remedy for horses, pets and people, as it can strengthen the immune system if used internally, aid in wound care and be used as an alternative to traditional antibiotics. Colloidal silver can be used topically on cuts, wounds and abrasions or sprayed on burns to help them heal rapidly without scarring. It is used to disinfect countertops, sterilize toothbrushes, diminish sores or ulcers as a mouth gargle, and can be added to cleaning solutions for kitchens and bathrooms.

Colloidal silver supports the T-cells (a class of white blood cells) in fighting foreign organisms and acts as a catalyst, not by attacking bacteria directly, but by decomposing certain enzymes required by anaerobic (does not require oxygen for growth) bacteria. It causes no harm to the beneficial bacteria that reside in our bodies. For this reason, it is thought that bacteria cannot develop a resistance to silver, as can be the case with traditional antibiotics. Taken internally it helps ward off and even cut down time from colds and flu in people. Effective dosages can be as little as one tablespoon to one ounce per day.

The Brigham Young University silver study documents the results of a quality colloidal silver product compared to standard antibiot-



ics, as used against a wide range of illness-causing organisms. The study conclusively demonstrated that based on the in-vitro studies conducted, colloidal silver may be an effective antibiotic alternative.²

How Does Colloidal Silver Help Horses?

Colloidal silver's germ killing agencies and natural antibiotic tendencies offer many benefits for horses, including:

• The Immune System

It is thought that, taken internally, colloidal silver acts as a second immune system and is toxic to protozoa and parasites in egg stage. I began using colloidal silver on my horse, Haley, after he received two months of traditional medication treatment for Equine Protozoal Myelitis (EPM), a progressive, degenerative neurological disease of the central nervous system and one of the most commonly diagnosed neurological disorders of horses in the United States. It is caused by the parasite *sarcocystis neurona*, which is thought to be spread by opossum feces and can contaminate any hay, feed, grass or water it comes in contact with. When ingested, the organism's eggs, called sporocysts, migrate to the central nervous system and multiply. Parasites can remain in the horse's nervous system for years without causing disease.

When Haley's test results finally showed that he had cleared the protozoa that had damaged his central nervous system, I wanted to use a product that could keep his immune system healthy and ward off any further protozoa attacks. I knew he would not be able to handle further damage to his spinal cord. After finding support through a web-based group of people also looking for safer options for their EPM horses, I began making my own colloidal silver. I started by giving him 2 cups of 10 PPM colloidal silver mixed in with his meals twice daily. It has no taste, so there were no palatability issues. It also made a nice substance for his supplements to adhere to in the meals. After one year of giving this dose, he was lowered to a maintenance dose of 2 cups per day, then to 1 cup per day with no subsequent relapses.

• Wound Care

Colloidal silver's germ killing action and ability to promote the healing of tissues makes it a wonderful topical healing agent for cuts,



A hind leg one month post-injury but before the use of colloidal silver



Hind leg injury one month after daily colloidal silver cleaning - notice no proud flesh!



A hind foot abscess and hoof wall separation receiving daily cleaning and soaking with colloidal silver



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How is Colloidal Silver Made?

It is made using a colloidal silver processor, steam distilled water and 99.99% pure silver. The quality of the water is very important and should be tested with the colloidal silver processor prior to use. A water testing meter should be used to test the PPM (parts per million) after each batch to ensure quality control. One PPM is equivalent to one milligram of silver per liter of water. Parts per million are used to measure the concentration of silver and in general a batch of silver that tests around 10 PPM is acceptable to use.

The process time for making one quart of colloidal silver varies depending on what instruments are used and can take between three and five hours. The finished product will be clear to pale yellow in color, depending on how light is absorbed and reflected. It should be stored away from direct sunlight and electromagnetic fields, and if stored properly, has a shelf life of around one year. It is odorless, nearly tasteless and a potent non-toxic disinfectant and healing agent.

scrapes, abrasions, abscesses, burns or any other type of wound. It can even be used on warts, growths, scratches and greasy heels. For hoof abscesses around the coronary band, use colloidal silver in a spray bottle and clean the wound opening with it daily. It can also be soaked on a cotton ball and gently pushed into the drainage site or added to the water if soaking the foot. In addition, it can also be useful for any insect or tick bite that develops a reaction. It keeps the wound clean and allows it to heal properly without the development of "proud flesh" – excessive growth of granulation tissue the body produces to fill in a wound.

I've used colloidal silver as a natural remedy for both horses and humans and think it is definitely worth having on hand at all times. ♪

This article is for informational purposes only and is not meant to replace veterinary care or advice.

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1. Environmental Protection Agency - Integrated Risk Information System: Silver CASRN 7440-2204: 1996
2. Brigham Young University: Time-Kill Study - Colloidal Silver: 2010

About the author:

Cindy Daigre is the founder and director of Ferrell Hollow Farm, an Equine Retirement facility in Tennessee focusing on the unique concerns of senior and special needs horses. In addition, she provides Equine Nutritional Consultations and has developed a specialized line of Natural Horse Care Products. For more information, visit her website at www.ferrellhollowfarm.com or email her at cindy@ferrellhollowfarm.com.



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