

# Holly's Laminitis Story

by Marijke van de Water

**H**olly is a 6 year old Arab mare from B.C., Canada, who was afflicted with severe laminitis in all four hooves in May 2012; she was unable to walk or even stand some days. By June of the same year, both Holly's progress and prognosis were poor. Thus Holly's owner Diane Armitage contacted me for help in healing her very sore hoof condition.

This case was of interest to me because, while the majority of cases of laminitis that I work with are caused by feed imbalances, leaky gut, Equine Metabolic Syndrome, lack of movement and/or poor hoof trims, Holly's case was more complex, and her laminitis was multi-factorial. In addition, other than a two week overdue trim, Holly's hoof angles and hoof mechanism were acceptable. Because Holly and Diane live several hours from the Riva's Remedies health clinic, I conducted Holly's health assessment by distance using The Marijke Method™, a specific method of kinesiology to identify underlying health issues and to formulate successful health programs. I found that Holly had three issues directly relating to her laminitis:

**1) Holly had an overgrowth of parasites** affecting her small intestine and her cecum. Parasites create acids, toxins and debris, which can inflame any type of body tissue including the lamina. Parasites also alter the balance of the cecal eco-system and can damage the intestinal wall contributing to "leaky gut," a cecal condition which is a common factor in laminitis. Many of the laminitic horses that cross my desk are found to have a problematic parasite load (even though fecal samples may have tested negative or mild).

**2) Holly showed a weakened immune system** caused by a previous tetanus vaccine. Many horses have adverse vaccine reactions that can damage the liver, the nervous system and the immune system. However if the reaction is delayed, rather than immediate and acute, we seldom make the connection that a current health problem can be caused by a vaccine that was administered several weeks, months or years ago. Horses with laminitis need a strong immune system to offset the toxins, maintain optimum digestion, to tolerate stress and to heal the damaged lamina.

**3) Holly had a hormonal imbalance** that affected her pituitary gland and her reproductive hormones. The pituitary was over-worked in an attempt to regulate Holly's estrogen and progesterone levels. Aside from pituitary hormones, all endocrine hormones are a potential factor in laminitis, as they interact with one another to



In the beginning, Holly would spend all day laying down with ice packs on all 4 feet.

regulate adequate levels of cortisol, adrenaline, thyroxine, and ACTH (adrenocorticotrophic hormone).

Even though Holly's diet was not a significant contributing factor to initiating her laminitis, diet is still always a major therapy in the recovery of every health condition. Food rules! Thus, Diane discontinued any grain and commercial feed and fed her local hay (dry) with soaked beet pulp and wheat bran. It was not necessary to soak the hay, because Holly showed no evidence of blood sugar abnormalities, including insulin resistance. (Beet pulp is a crude form of low-glycemic fibre that helps to detoxify the colon, regulate weight, and lower the glycemic index of other foods by slowing down sugar absorption from the small intestine into the blood. In this way, it also helps horses who have a voracious appetite, as it gives them higher levels of satiety.)

Holly's hoof trim was updated, and she was given daily doses of herbal tinctures (yellow dock, gentian, sage) with Vitamin B12 to eradicate and resist parasites, and to detoxify her liver. Along with the Vitamin B12, we used Vitamin B6 and homeopathic FSH (follicle stimulate hormone) to balance her hormones and take the load off her pituitary gland. In addition, Holly was also given homeopathic Arsenicum daily for 4 days to neutralize the negative effects of the vaccine.

Within the next few weeks, Holly showed improvements in her energy levels, hair coat, hoof inflammation and soundness. She looked well and was in good spirits, but she was still not 100% sound. At the end of June and early July, we continued to address the parasites, and we also adjusted the vitamin program to include Vitamin E for circulation. Despite her progress, we were still not successful in getting her fully on her feet. Certain that we had corrected all of the initial underlying causes, I reviewed her case

All photos courtesy Marijke van de Water

once again by testing organ points and tracking her energy field to determine which body organs or mal-functions were contributing to the ongoing inflammation of the lamina.

Holly's review showed that her adrenal glands were under-functioning and she was not producing enough noradrenaline (vaso-dilator) and cortisol (natural anti-inflammatory). Because her adrenal glands did not surface as a problem during the first assessment, it was apparent that Holly's adrenal glands had become exhausted during the length of her ordeal. To strengthen Holly's adrenal function, we added an herbal combination of ashwaghandha, chaste berry, kelp, licorice root and raspberry leaf. Thankfully, Holly improved almost immediately, and the adrenal supplement turned out to be the last component of Holly's health program to complete her recovery.

Holly is now back to her beautiful fun self, racing up and down the fence to beat the band.

I am blessed to have been part of Holly's healing journey.



Holly is now well and playing at full throttle!

Here is how Holly's owner Diane described her and Holly's experience:

*Finale! Holly is one HUNDRED percent healed from her dire laminitic episode—her feet are beautiful and stronger than ever, and her overall health is honed and balanced. Again, I thank Holly's spirit for trusting me with all the process and my BIGGEST thank you to Marijke of Riva's Remedies. Marijke's ability to "long distance" heal and consult are extraordinary. Holly's condition was quite extreme—she was unable to stand at all in the beginning, and she spent days laying with ice packs on all 4 feet. I worried that her time was delayed due to a previous misdiagnosis. Tic tock... my intuition was to contact Marijke and trust all that was advised. A couple of times I was hit with feelings of helplessness, but after a brief talk with Marijke, my confidence*

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came back with a heightened positive attitude, which is imperative to working with or healing horses or any animal. They are so sensitive, and any anxiety or worry is relayed back to them and carried by them.

I definitely want to thank my family through most of this period, as I was entirely focused on Holly's healing. There was no cooking, no cleaning and no me in the home. Their understanding and support... well, I couldn't have done this without them. I think they are glad I'm back.

I guess a thank you to me for my tenacity (three months of healing) and the ability to use my own intuition, as well. LOL now—three months of catering to Holly has set new standards in “her” mind—PLAY TIME, little mare.

Remember, healing work can take time, and in our case, the focus was not “solely” directed at the feet, but her overall health. Like in training “it takes the time it takes”—please research your options if you find yourself in this situation. The three months it took has created an even greater bond between Holly and me. ♥

Marijke, if it weren't for you there with me, I am sure Holly wouldn't be here today—big \*HUGS\* I look forward to hugging you in person at this year's Mane Event!—Diane Armitage, Rosedale, B.C.

**Marijke's Mission Statement:** “It is no longer acceptable to euthanize laminitic horses.” 🐾

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