

## An Overview of Ulcers in Horses

Your horse could have an ulcer without you knowing it. Ulcers are extremely common in horses (60 to 90%) and the signs of an ulcer can be so subtle that even horses that appear to be completely healthy can still have an ulcer. Have you seen a slight change in attitude, a lack of desire to train, or decreased performance? It very well could be the result of an ulcer.

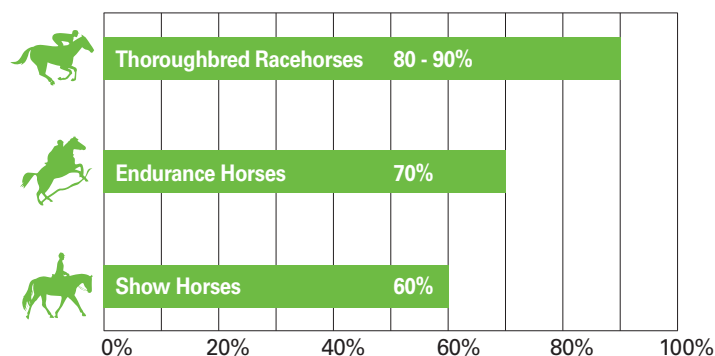
### Why are ulcers so much more prevalent in horses than in humans?

Relatively speaking, the stomach of the horse is small and as a result, horses can't consume large amounts of food. Horses are designed to graze, eating small amounts frequently throughout the day. In order to support a grazing lifestyle, the horse's stomach requires an ongoing supply of acid for digestion. If a horse is actually grazing, the acid is offset by the high roughage natural diet and saliva. When horses are confined to a stall without access to grazing and fed two times a day, there are long periods without feed to counteract the acid, creating a fertile environment for ulcers.

### The Subtle Signs of Gastric Ulcers

- Poor appetite
- Poor performance
- Poor body condition
- Lack of interest to train
- Dull hair coat
- Drooling
- Mild weight loss
- Change in attitude
- Diarrhea
- Mild colic

### Prevalence of ulcers by breed



### Other contributing factors

The upper part of the horse's stomach is naturally less protected against acid and therefore the place where 80% of ulcers are found. When horses are involved in intense work, the excess acid in the stomach splashes onto the upper portion of the stomach, further increasing the potential for ulcers. This explains why race horses and endurance horses have a higher incidence of ulcers. In addition to physical stress, environmental stress also plays a role, such as during transport or simply from being confined to a stall. According to the UC Davis Veterinary Medicine Center for Equine Health, studies have shown that horses can develop gastric ulceration during just a few hours of transport, verified by gastroscopy.

### The problem with foals

Foals secrete highly acidic gastric acid as early as 2 days of age and thus are at a significant risk of developing peptic ulcers until they are several weeks old when their gastric mucosa is developed to full thickness. The lesions are unlikely to heal without medical intervention.



# What are your options?

The only way to confirm the existence of an ulcer is through gastric endoscopy. Your veterinarian has the equipment and expertise to diagnose an ulcer. There is only one FDA approved ingredient available in two different products through your veterinarian to treat ulcers. In addition, there are many products on the market that attempt to support the gastric and digestive systems. While these products cannot claim to treat ulcers, their goal is to create an improved environment in the gastrointestinal system. There are a number of alternative ingredients that have been found to help.

**Glutamine:** Glutamine nourishes immune cells in the gastrointestinal tract which contribute to the healing of wounds. In fact, it's the metabolic fuel for the growth and proliferation of these

cells. Endurance horses have been shown to have decreased plasma glutamine after prolonged exercise. This depletion and immunosuppression may render a horse more susceptible to infection. In addition, numerous animal studies have shown that glutamine supplementation improves gut barrier function.

**Licorice (*Glycyrrhiza Glabra*):**

Licorice can lower stomach acid levels and has well-documented anti-ulcer and other healing properties. It also has anti-bacterial and anti-viral properties.

**Ginger:** Ginger is an anti-bacterial known for its ability to ease indigestion

and gastrointestinal problems. The gastroprotective effects of ginger have been demonstrated in various animal studies.

**Chamomile:** Chamomile is an anti-bacterial that also promotes general relaxation and stress relief. It has also been used to treat gastritis and can relax the digestive system and ease an upset stomach or indigestion. It is especially helpful in reducing the impact of processing stress through the intestinal system in the form of colic, diarrhea and weight loss.

**Peppermint Oil:** Peppermint is known for its ability to calm inflammations and soothe digestive problems. It also acts as an appetite stimulant.

## Gardion® – An Ounce of Prevention for less than \$1.00 per day

One product that supports gastric and digestive functions is **Gardion®** by Spectra Animal Health. **Gardion®** contains all of the above ingredients in human food grade quality. All herbs are standardized to a minimum active content and combined into a proprietary blend.

Original **Gardion** is designed to be syringed into the horse's mouth for 16 to 30 days while **Gardion® Daily** is thicker and designed to be top-dressed on feed daily for ongoing support. Field testing with trainers has produced phenomenal results, essentially producing the benefit of reversing the subtle negative signs of ulcers listed on the front, including a 5 day back on full feed guarantee.



**ION Equine Health**

*"When I started breaking my young horses in the fall, I noticed a hand full of them drooling a lot and full of nervous energy, a good indication of ulcers. I put them on Gardion and saw an immediate change. Then, I put all my horses on it, both youngsters and older horses and have had a very good year as far as horses eating and staying heavier and healthier throughout the year. I strongly recommend Gardion and believe firmly in this product."*

**Jimmy Miranda,**  
owner of Rapid Run Training Center,  
Ocala, Florida

### How Supplied

Spectra Code	Size	Description
40323	32 oz. (0.945L)	Gardion® Equine
40343	1 gal. (3.78L)	Gardion® Daily

**Directions:** Shake well before use.

**Loading Period:** Feed 2 oz. (60 ml) daily of **Gardion** by mouth for 16 to 30 days.

**Maintenance:** Mix 1 oz. (30 ml) daily of **Gardion Daily** into the horse's feed.

**Expect Results:** Within 14 days. 5-7 days back on full feed.

**SPECTRA**  
Expect Results.