

Help - my horse has ADHD!

Does your horse suffer from these symptoms?

- Easily distracted
- Tension in dressage
- Strong in jumping phases
- Thinking backwards in jumping phases
- Unresponsive to aids
- Making questionable decisions

Malcolm Green, horse behavioural and nutritional specialist from Calinnova Ltd, believes that Attention Deficient and Hyperactivity Disorder has long been a significant problem with horses. It is his belief that our horses are simply nutrient deficient and so their brains are unable to function "as nature intended". As a result, we witness a number of behaviour and judgement problems from the extreme (as seen centre right) to simply poor concentration (as we can see from this confused horse above right).

Malcolm explains "It is just simple science. The brain needs a whole host of different molecules to function properly. If any of these are supplied inadequately, brain power is impaired. When people express symptoms of ADHD they are often recommended to eat a healthier diet or take supplements. Our horses are no different - we share identical biochemistry in the brain."

According to Dr. D. Pauli, an expert at the World Health Organisation, "One of the most

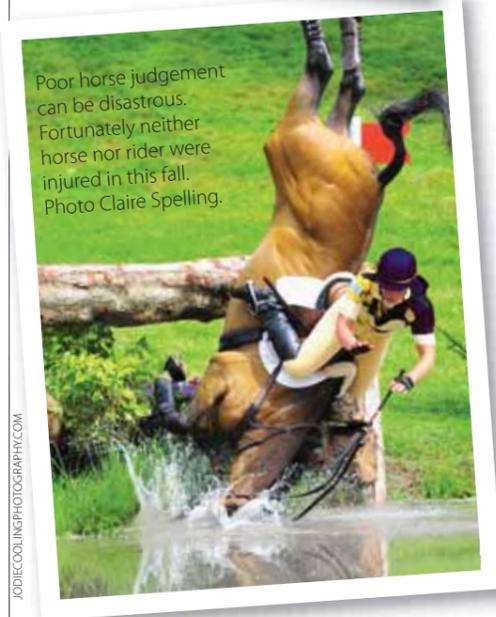
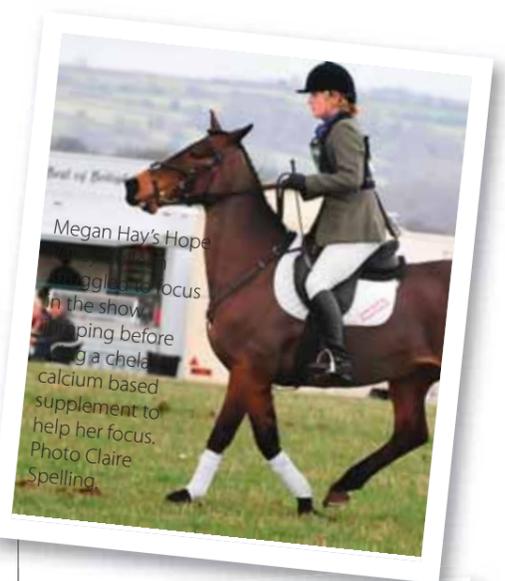
frequent triggers of ADHD has to do with nutritional status. When children suffer from deficiencies in important vitamins and minerals their brain's biochemistry is thrown out of balance and they develop symptoms that are then labelled as ADHD. Calcium deficiency is among the most common mineral deficiencies detected in children with ADHD".

Furthermore, Dr. Robert Thiel, Ph.D. from The American Naturopathic Medical Association Monitor, conducted a study of children and adults suffering from Attention Deficit Disorder showed that 52% of those tested were calcium deficient and the remaining were deficient in other vitamins and minerals such B6 and magnesium.

In their book, "The role of calcium and comparable cations in animal behaviour" published by The Royal Society of Chemistry, Drs Wilkins and Wilkins explain that calcium is the molecule responsible for switching the nerve cells on. It controls the absorption of neurotransmitters (the chemical messengers that stimulate the nerve cell), it also initiates the release of neurotransmitters enabling the nerve cell to pass its message on to its target cells and organs, helping the brain function normally. Between those two jobs it initiates the electrical impulse that travels down the nerve cell. Put simply calcium controls the most important functions in the brain.

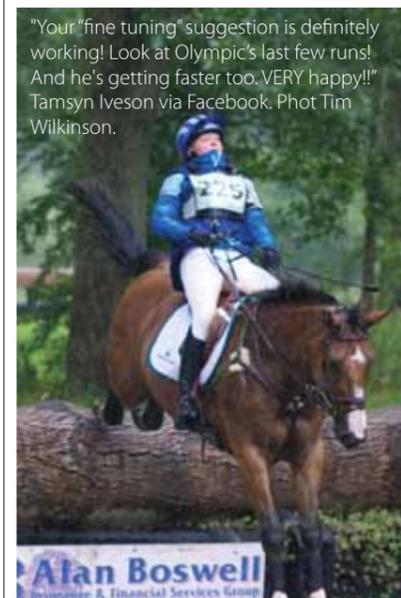
In recent trials, EquiFeast found that only chelated calcium has any real impact on brain function. The nutrients traditionally used by the horse feed and supplements industry had virtually no effect. This is an identical result to that experienced in other species and Malcolm Green reports an impressive 79% success rate in improving horse behaviour, concentration and trainability - exactly the same issues that teachers face with ADHD children.

Human society tends to treat ADHD children with chemical coshes like Ritalin. More enlightened people (like Dr Pauli) use very small amounts of simple nutrients. Exactly the same applies to horses. A hard working 500 kg event horse probably gets between 80-120 grams of calcium from a diet of hay/pasture



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“*Only chelated calcium has any real impact on brain function*”



Calcium for the brain

and concentrate/feed balancer. Most horses need just another 3.6 grams of calcium from a natural, chelated source to sort out the brain. Clearly this is a tiny amount which highlights that it is the bio-availability that matters not the total quantity. These figures for horses are completely consistent with those of dozens of other species EquiFeast's parent company, Calinnova Ltd, has worked with over the past 17 years.

Products like Cool, Calm & Collected and WINNINGEDGE (both containing chelated calcium amongst their many ingredients) are designed to be another tool in the rider's armoury. Malcolm concludes by saying "For years riders have considered nutrition for energy, stamina, mobility and muscle building as essential but a complete rider must also consider "brain food" as crucial for improved concentration, better judgement and decision making. These all lead to greater cooperation with the rider, a safer more enjoyable ride and better results for both inexperienced and elite riders alike".

New Zealand Olympian Joe Meyer hates "horse calmers" but all of his horses get supplemented with chelated calcium based supplements to help with concentration and judgement. This is Joe on Sanskrit finishing second at last year's British Open Championships at Gatcombe. Photo Jon Stroud.



Talk to the experts

By carefully monitoring customer's horses and their response to different nutrients, EquiFeast and Malcolm Green believe that chelated calcium is the number one priority for "normal" brain function. But it is not the only nutrient involved in the horse's ability to make good quick decisions and concentrate properly. With our rapidly growing database of customer feedback our experienced advisory team are getting better and better at finding out just what makes each individual horse tick. And we are expanding the number of nutrients we are looking at to help all of our customers get even better results. This "fine tuning" service is free to customers.

Feed and supplement companies, anywhere in the world, who want to know more about this are also welcome to contact us.

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WINNINGEDGE

