

SOP094 Electro acupuncture for Horses

Recommended instructor to student ratio: 1:3

Category

3. Minor conscious intervention

Objective

To provide acupuncture therapy to horses

Alternatives to animal use

No practical alternative

Equipment

Acupuncture needles in varying lengths and the electro acupuncture unit.

Safety and Risk considerations

Some animals resent acupuncture therapy. The impact of this can be minimized by the use of appropriate restraints such as sedation and/or a crush. Risk of injury can be minimised by ensuring that personnel involved are adequately trained in handling and restraint of horses.

Drugs, chemicals or biological agents

Antiseptic to clean the skin prior to acupuncture therapy

Procedure

Acupuncture therapy is carried out by inserting acupuncture needles into acupuncture points, perpendicular to the skin. The points chosen vary depending on the reason for treatment and are different for every animal (please see diagram below). The length and gauge of needle used varies depending on the acupoint chosen. Please see table for guide:

Gauge (diameter)	Millimetre (length)	Application in the horse
30	30	Distal limb points
30	50	Withers, shoulder, hip points
30	75	Back points
35	15	Distal limb points
35	25	Distal limb points
35	50	Distal limb points

Once needles are in place, the electro acupuncture unit can be attached to the various acupuncture needles via electrodes anywhere along the needles length. The frequency and intensity of electricity delivered to these points via the needles is varied depending on response (pulsation of muscles at needle points). The machine ranges from a frequency of 1Hz to 200Hz and an intensity of 1 to 10 with one being low intensity and 10 being high intensity. Electroacupuncture is generally performed for between 10 and 30 minutes for each treatment.

Impact on wellbeing of animals

Nil

Animal Care

Observe animals for signs of excessive distress, such as neighing, striking, kicking, walking forward into handler. If any evidence of distress is observed the procedure should be discontinued.

Pain Relief

Not required

Reuse and repeated use

Procedures should only be repeated once per day per animal for demonstration. For research purposes, animals may also be treated once daily.

Qualification, experience or training necessary to perform procedure

Demonstrator: only certified veterinary acupuncturists or veterinarians gaining qualification in acupuncture of horses should attempt this procedure.

Other personnel: competence in handling, restraint and understanding of, and appropriate response to, equine behaviour are essential.

EQUINE ACUPRESSURE MERIDIAN CHART

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FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:



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