

Hoof Problem Identifier Chart

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Many factors are responsible for your horse's hoof condition, including environment, previous hoof disease, and nutrition. Proper hoof care is essential including daily cleaning and proper trimming and proper shoeing.

Disease	Definition	Causes	Signs	Treatment	Prevention
Abscesses	Infections of the soft portion of the hoof	Usually start as a result of a puncture wound or injury	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lameness with severe pain - May see dark spot on hoof - Some abscesses may open and drain 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Consult your veterinarian - Abscess will need to be opened to allow drainage - Antibiotics for deeper abscesses - Severe abscesses may require long-term treatment with regular dressing changes - Ensure tetanus vaccination is up to date 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Good hoof care to prevent cracks and injuries, including topical protection - Early diagnosis provides a much better prognosis
Contracted Heels	The heel area narrows such that the width at the base of the frog is less than 2/3 the width of the widest part of the hoof	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Poor conformation - genetics - Dry environment leading to loss of moisture in hoof - Improper shoeing or poor hoof trimming - Lack of exercise 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The width at the base of the frog is less than 2/3 the width of the widest part of the hoof - Can often lead to other hoof problems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Consult your veterinarian - Proper hoof trimming (may take months of regular trimming to resolve) and, if necessary, corrective shoeing - Restore hoof moisture - Ensure tetanus vaccination is up to date 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Proper hoof trimming and shoeing - Providing adequate exercise
Corns	Bruise of the sole at the back of the hoof at the angle between the wall and the bars	Improper shoeing or poor hoof trimming	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Yellow or red discoloration of the sole, usually on the front feet - Possible lameness - Soreness of the area when using a hoof tester - Area of corn may become abscessed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Consult your veterinarian - Corrective trimming - Shoeing to protect and transfer weight from the bruised area - Draining of the area if there is an abscess 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Proper hoof trimming and shoeing
Laminitis (Founder)	Inflammation of the sensitive lamina (the connective tissue between the hoof and the coffin bone). The circulation becomes disrupted.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Poor foot trimming - Grain overload - Toxicity from colic - Certain steroid 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The signs are progressive. At first, walks as though on eggshells. Then weight shifted to rear feet. Then resists walking, and lies down much of the time. Can result in 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Consult your veterinarian - Radiographs (x-rays) often necessary - Provide soft footing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Proper shoeing - Good nutrition - avoid too much grain or concentrated carbohydrate

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> medications - Foot injury 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> severe, permanent, life-threatening lameness. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Give anti-inflammatory medications and medications that improve circulation to the foot - Corrective shoeing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provide good footing
Navicular Syndrome	Inflammation and degeneration of the navicular bone and surrounding tissues. This disease begins with inflammation and gradually results in deterioration of the bony tissue of the navicular bone.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Genetics and poor conformation - Improper nutrition - Continual impact of the toe on hard surfaces 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Intermittent lameness that tends to get worse over time - Toe will become worn as it hits the ground before the heel - Usually affects front feet 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Consult your veterinarian - Proper trimming and shoeing - Medications to increase circulation and decrease pain - Surgery may be necessary 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Proper breeding - Proper shoeing - Adequate exercise, avoiding athletic stress
Sand Cracks	Vertical cracks in the hoof wall that start at the ground surface	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Improper shoeing - Excessively dry environment - Poor nutrition - Training on hard surfaces 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Crack usually visible. May not cause lameness if remains superficial. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Consult your veterinarian - Corrective shoeing - Restrict activity - If deep, hoof repair and pain medication - Ensure tetanus vaccination is up to date 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Proper shoeing - Good nutrition - Hoof moisturizer and protectant
Seedy Toe	Separation of the hoof wall at the white line. Is sometimes used as a synonym for "white line disease"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Often a consequence of laminitis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Crumbly soft material at the junction of the hoof wall and sole (the white line) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Consult your veterinarian - Hoof trimming and corrective shoeing - Ensure tetanus vaccination is up to date 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Prevent conditions that could lead to laminitis
Thrush	Bacterial infection of the frog	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Frog consistently packed with manure, mud, or moist bedding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Foul-smelling, black, clay-like material in the area surrounding the frog 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Consult your veterinarian - Clean hooves - Improve sanitation and keep horse's feet dry - Use a drying agent if necessary - Ensure tetanus vaccination is up to date 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Clean hooves regularly - Provide dry environment - Use a thrush topical
White Line Disease	A breakdown of the protein in the inner hoof wall by bacteria and fungi	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Bacterial or fungal infection often associated with hoof injuries that allow entrance of the microorganisms - More common in humid conditions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Starts with powdery, chalky area located along the junction of the hoof wall and sole (the white line); then causes a separation of the wall and sole - Soreness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Consult your veterinarian - Hoof trimming to remove affected wall - Corrective shoeing - Medications to kill fungus and bacteria 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Proper trimming - Prompt treatment of any other hoof condition - Proper nutrition

		- Improper trimming	- Abnormal growth of hoof wall	- Keep hoof clean and dry - Ensure tetanus vaccination is up to date	- Good sanitation
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