



# WHAT IS ACID SPLASH

BY TAHN TOWNS

## WHAT IS ACID SPLASH?

The equine stomach in a natural environment is kept full 16 to 20 hours a day by the horse constantly grazing pasture or hay. Hydrochloric acid and the enzyme pepsin is produced 24 hours per day in the horse's stomach, and is a necessary and important part of the digestion process. Without proper levels of this stomach acid, feed and supplements cannot be properly broken down to the molecular components and this results in nutrients that are not able to be absorbed into the horse's body. Over the long term, this may leave horses at risk for nutrient deficiencies.

A horse can only produce saliva when he moves his jaws. Normal chewing action produces 100 to 150 litres of saliva daily. A horse's saliva contains substantial amounts of bicarbonates which buffer the stomach acid. The horse's stomach empties in 15 to 20 minutes leaving only a small amount of digesta (acid) in the bottom of the stomach. The stomach continues to produce more acid, and the horse continues to chew feed, and the acid is continually buffered with fresh saliva. A horse with a full stomach that has the acid continually buffered appears to have very few problems with ulcers. But, what happens when we are training, racing, trail riding, trailering or withholding feed?

During work or stress the stomach shrinks (as much as 60% in some cases), due to the increase of blood flow to the extremities of the body, resulting in a decreased blood flow to the stomach. The upper portion of the stomach collapses in on itself and the remaining acid in the lower portion of the stomach is splashed onto the upper area. This upper area (Squamous Mucosa) is not as resistant to the stomach acid as the lower portion (Glandular Mucosa). The result is acid splashing onto the unprotected Squamous Mucosa while the horse is being worked, trailered, or having feed withheld and this may cause discomfort or sharp pain. Acid Splash can also lead to the development of stomach ulcers.

Unbuffered acid is also believed to trickle into the small intestine, causing duodenal ulcers and creating a drop in the pH level throughout the remainder of the digestive tract and potentially contributing to

hind gut acidosis.

## WHAT IS ACID FX?

Acid FX is designed to alleviate acid splash for temporary periods of time. Administered orally 15 -20 minutes prior to riding or hauling, it coats the stomach lining relieving acid splash pain. The result is a comfortable and calmer horse that responds quickly and willingly, does not 'grab onto' the bit, rides more comfortably in the trailer, and returns to eating and drinking much quicker after work or racing. Warm up times and premature sweating are often decreased and the 'hot' anxious horses become more relaxed and calmer. Feedback from race horse trainers say that their race horses walk to the track, work hard, then walk calmly back to their stalls.

AFX is designed to be used every day the horse is worked or trailered. Use it on Hunters, Show Jumpers, Barrel, Reining, Pleasure, Halter, Dressage, Three Day Event, Endurance, Standardbred and Thoroughbred racing, School Horses, Sale Horses, and those going on out on trail rides. Anytime the horse will be exposed to a situation where acid splash and stomach irritation is possible, it's the time to use Acid FX. The old adage: An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure, certainly applies when it comes to protecting your horse's stomach - and his ability to perform!

AFX is a blend of USP Calcium carbonate and USP Magnesium Oxide, Soy Lecithin and L-Glutamine (to coat and help heal ulcers).

Acid FX does not effect performance testing.

## DIRECTIONS FOR USE OF AFX

Start by giving 60 cc orally for several days so you get familiar with your horse's response. Then decrease the dose slowly each day until you find the dose that is ineffective, then increase the dose again until you find the effective dose for that particular horse.

## **RACE HORSES**

Daily : 30 to 60 CC daily 15 to 20 minutes before work

Race day: 60cc and 20 grams of EQUINE

CHOICE probiotic paste and 60 cc of ACID FX 3 hours before a race . If possible give another 30 cc of ACID FX as close to race as possible.

### **PERFORMANCE OR SHOW HORSES**

Daily: 30 – 60cc of ACID FX 15 to 20 minutes before daily work

Show day: 30 - 60cc of ACID FX and 20 grams of EQUINE CHOICE probiotic paste 3 hours before performance ( Helps stabilize the hind gut PH) (Leave on high quality Hay and water until 30 minutes before entering ring ) Supply hay and water between classes if possible.

Give 30 – 60cc of ACID FX 15 to 20 minutes before entering show ring or event.

### **TRAILERING**

15 to 20 minutes before loading: Give 30cc to 60cc of ACID FX with 20 grams of EQUINE CHOICE probiotic paste. . Repeat every 4 hours during long trips, stopping to offer hay and water.

Acid Fx is designed to work in conjunctions with Equine Choice Probiotics & Prebiotics. Always provide good quality roughage and water 24/7. The goal is to be as proactive as possible in preventing digestive issues.

### **DO PROBIOTICS HELP WITH ACID SPLASH?**

Probiotics do not directly help with Acid Splash, they do however play an important indirect role. The irritation of the Squamous Mucosa (lining of

the upper stomach) from hydrochloric acid during exercise and the resulting ulcers are not directly helped by probiotics of any kind. Equine Choice Probiotics & Prebiotics promote enzymatic digestion in the small intestine and bacterial fermentation in the hind gut. In addition, the probiotics help maintain the hind gut pH levels when fiber from high quality hay or pasture is continually available to the horse. This helps prevent hind gut acidosis. (more on Hind Gut Acidosis on the probiotic details page)  
The enhanced efficiency of the digestive tract creates an appetite in poor eaters and those horses that may go off feed when hauling and showing, (or are ill) so they feel like consuming hay. If the horse has an appetite to continually nibble at hay, then saliva is continually being produced. This saliva is what acts as a natural and continual buffer on the hydrochloric acid in the stomach acid. The problem occurs when the horse does not have access to food (being worked with, ridden, waiting in the hitching ring, being shod, trailered, or fasted for surgical procedures. Even those anxious horses who refuse to eat due to stressful circumstances (stall mate just left the farm) can be at risk for acid splash and potential damage to the stomach lining. These are the horses who will benefit from being given AFX to help address potential acid splash issues.

