

Foreword



When I received the preprint of the book *Equine Physical Therapy, Rehabilitation and Sports Medicine*, I was immediately fascinated by its wide content, its didactic presentation making it easy to consult and the quality of illustrations. It is my great pleasure to introduce this book driven by world renown experts helped by a team of experienced clinicians and researchers providing a highly informative overview which covers a wide spectrum of clinical and professional fields in a very concise manner. The result is a reference and very instructive document for teaching veterinary students, residents in equine sports medicine and rehabilitation as well as equine practitioners working alone or in hospitals. I cannot retain my wholehearted congratulations to the editor, authors, and main authors for providing such an amount of updated knowledge.

In volume of more than 800 Pages this encyclopedia first covers the most relevant aspects of the physiology and physiopathology of anatomical structures and tissues. This is followed by several didactic chapters on the anatomy, functional anatomy and biomechanics of the locomotor system nicely illustrated with clean dissections and clear drawings. Conformation, locomotion, and exercise physiology are then considered with the same concern of rigor and clarity.

An adequate management always begins with a precise and complete diagnosis; this is why specific chapters are devoted to patient examination in the context of rehabilitation and diagnostic imaging, preceding the evaluation of the different causes of poor performance.

Several chapters refer to horseman/womanship education and skills which may be essential in the management of riding difficulties. They include saddle evaluation, bridle, and bit fit, rider and horse interaction, asymmetry and laterality in horses interfering with athletic capacities. Considerations on nutrition and housing, essential contributors to the horse welfare and well-being are informatively presented before practical recommendations for training and conditioning.

An essential portion of this book is dedicated to manual therapies, a core aspect of physical management of locomotor injuries and dysfunctions. Massage, lymphatic drainage, fascial manipulation, joint mobilization as well as chiropractic and osteopathy, techniques contributing to deepen the diagnostic knowledge of the patient with the objective of improving function, are considered.

The use of a wide range of therapeutic and proprioceptive exercises at different gaits is then discussed as well as the biological effects and indications of treadmills, horse walkers and aquatic exercises.

Several instrumental physical therapy modalities are reviewed considering their biological effects and indications; they include cryotherapy, heat, laser, therapeutic ultrasound, shock wave

therapy, magnetic therapy, radiofrequency, nuclear magnetic resonance therapy and percutaneous needle electrolysis. Although there is still a lot to investigate to establish the most effective protocols and efficacy of these modalities, their use requires a closer and regular evaluation of the patient allowing to adjust exercise protocols which helps the horse and its owner to surpass their problems.

The last part of the book provides a complete review of physical, functional, and medical modalities such as vibration therapy, kinesiology taping, acupuncture and regenerative therapies including hoof balance and shoeing, an essential part of the management of distal limb injuries. Key facts of the behavior and welfare of horses in rehabilitation are then presented.

The final chapters end with the choice of the most adequate therapy considering the horse discipline and physical status and underline the essential adhesion of the owner/rider in a rehabilitation program.

When I received the preprint of this book, it was like a revelation. I was convinced that new times were open for better care, consideration and management of the equine patient being either an athlete or a wonderful leisure companion or even a horse at the dawn of its life.

This book is an extremely informative reference for equine practitioners and encourages a less invasive approach of the management of equine athletes, sometimes suffering from too many injections. The clinical examination is promoted rather than the overuse of diagnostic imaging modalities and physiotherapy rather than overmedication. This book provides the basis for going further to validate manual and instrumental modalities in the treatment and management of equine locomotor and medical conditions.

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