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Equine WELLNESS

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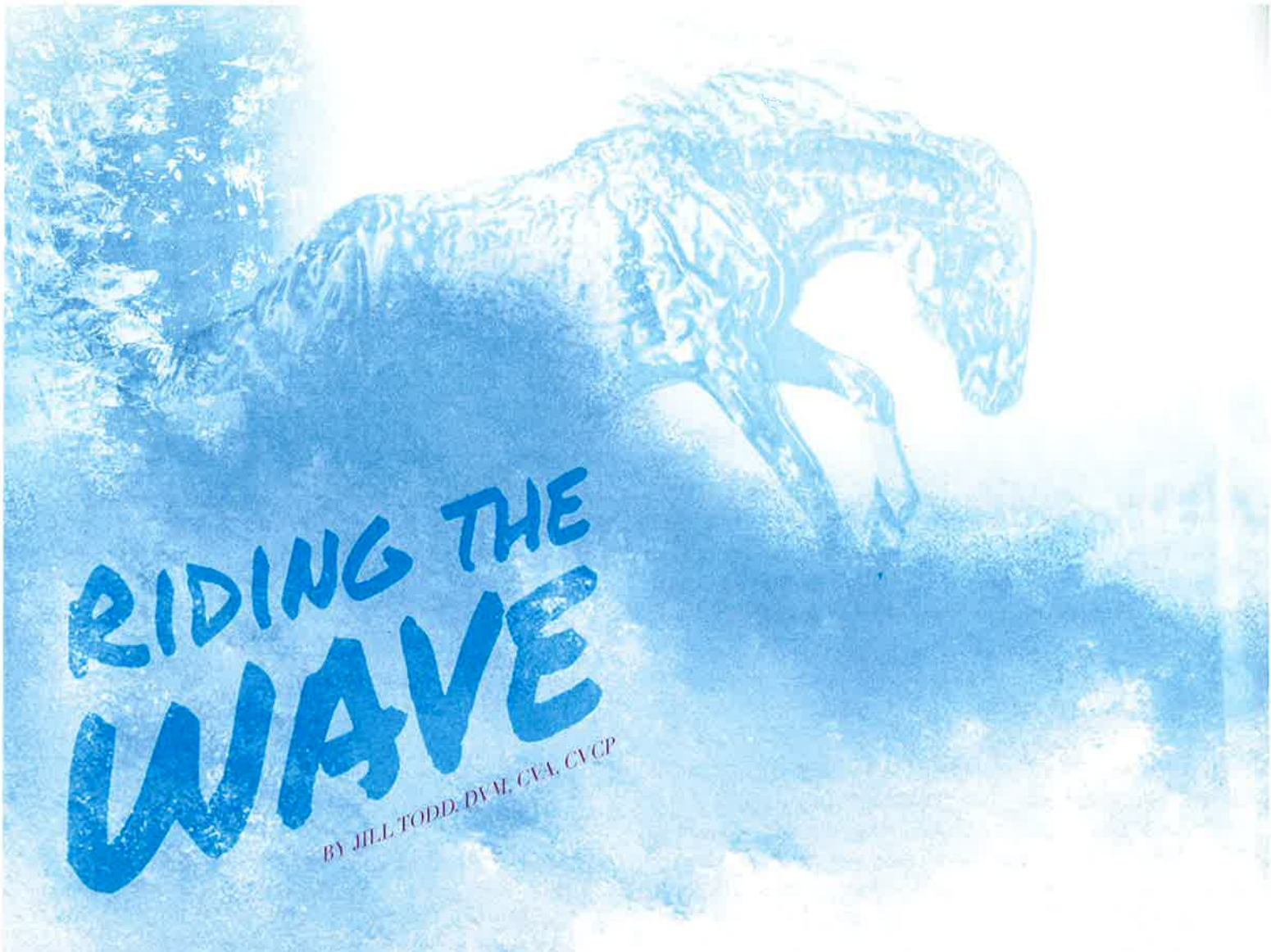


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Veterinary cold laser therapy can be a helpful aid for treating equine tendon/ligament injuries, as well as for rehabilitation and performance enhancement.

It sounds futuristic, but cold laser therapy has been used successfully with human athletes for many years. It has become a mainstay in professional sports where fast healing is not just desirable but necessary for athletes to remain competitive. Dr. Jeff Spencer, a chiropractor for the Tour De France bicycling team, performs laser treatments on cyclists before and after every ride. He is adamant that laser is an integral part of his treatment protocol and won't leave home without it. Tiger Woods, The New England Patriots, U2, Sheryl Crow, and many other professionals have used cold laser therapy to enhance their performance, and rehabilitate injuries.

I have integrated my studies with Drs. Jeff Spencer, Dan Murphy and William Inman to advance my Frequency Specific

Low Level Laser Light knowledge and capabilities. The uses of this technology are fascinating and expanding exponentially. Light therapy is just starting to catch on in the US and will become mainstay in most veterinary, chiropractic and physical rehabilitation practices.

WHAT IS VLLLT?

Veterinary Low Level Laser Therapy, or VLLLT, has more recently entered the veterinary world as a viable therapy. VLLLT has been shown to help treat arthritis pain, accelerate wound healing, and reduce acute tissue inflammation. Its prospects for equestrian sports and rehabilitation are remarkable. This modality, in conjunction with traditional veterinary care, is an integral part of treating and rehabilitating the equine athlete. By using high technology

instrumentation for diagnostics and treatment, horses are returning to function in a stronger state, with less chance of re-injury.

LIGHT THERAPY IS JUST STARTING TO CATCH ON IN THE US AND WILL BECOME A MAINSTAY IN MOST VETERINARY, CHIROPRACTIC, AND PHYSICAL REHABILITATION PRACTICES.

VLLLT involves the use of cold laser therapy at a specific frequency to stimulate healing. Light Amplification by Stimulated Emission Rays (LASER), involves a highly concentrated coherent light that can be altered to attain many different outcomes. It is a natural and biological therapy that uses light to restore health to ailing cells. Cold laser therapy uses light at a concise wavelength directed at muscles, tissues, organs, connective tissue, tendons, the blood, and the living matrix of the body to stimulate healing at the cellular tissue level. VLLLT uses a wavelength different from other lasers, and is used for hair removal, surgical and other therapeutic instruments, making it a very specialized modality.

HOW DOES IT WORK?

The technology of laser therapy integrates biology and quantum physics to accelerate healing in the mitochondria of the cell. Cold laser is a bio-modulator that will up-regulate or down-regulate the targeted area of the body through the use of coherent light at precise wavelengths. The laser light communicates to the cells, stimulating them to heal themselves, grow, change and survive.

Cold laser beams are directed at the local area of injury, whether tendon, ligament, joint, spine, brain, or acupuncture meridian,



Cold laser helps stimulate healing at the cellular level.



The beams are red in color, and directed at the local area of injury.

for three to 20 minutes. The number of sessions varies, depending on the severity and chronic nature of the disease process. Other variables that determine the number of sessions include the age and general health of the horse as well as his performance goals and nutrition levels. The beams are red in color, with some lasers having multiple beams programmed at specific frequencies to target the area of involvement – affected nerve root, synovial cells, fibroblasts, lymph node drainage. The treatment allows for focus on the injury while also stimulating the brain. This leads not only to healing, but also neurological re-organization and reorientation at the brain level.

Animals treated with VLLLT usually have no side effects. Most horses tend to react to VLLLT just as they do to massage therapy or acupuncture. After the light penetrates the skin, they may get relaxed, drop their heads or salivate. Other physiologic effects include hiccups, relaxing sphincters, or dropping penises. Many horses show immediate gratification due to pain relief, and will stretch, yawn and shake their heads to show they are pleased.

VLLLT AND TENDON/LIGAMENT INJURIES


Tendon and ligament injuries should be evaluated with ultrasound or MRI. Three things are evaluated when interpreting these injuries:

THE COLD LASER IS A BIO-MODULATOR THAT WILL UP-REGULATE OR DOWN-REGULATE THE TARGETED AREA OF THE BODY THROUGH THE USE OF COHERENT LIGHT AT PRECISE WAVELENGTHS.

- The degree of fiber compromise (mild, moderate or severe)
- The percentage of fiber compromise (zero to 100%)
- The location of fiber compromise

The combination of these findings gives insight into the type of lesion(s) the horse has, the prognosis for future performance, the most appropriate therapeutic strategy, the approximate time required for the injury to heal adequately, and the time required for the horse to resume a normal work routine once the lesion(s) has healed.

It takes ten to 12 months for tendon/ligament injuries to heal via the formation of scar tissue. This scar tissue is a reorganization of fibers and one of the keys to success for future performance. VLLLT excels at tissue healing by stimulating fibroblast and reorganizing the tissue. The first 90 days of healing is when the damaged fibers are replaced with scar tissue. Enhanced scar tissue strength and reorganization of tendon fibrils is one of the great features of VLLLT. Maximum strength of tendon/ligament scar tissue is attained in seven to nine months.

Diagnosis, treatment and rehabilitation of tendon and/or ligament injuries are all vital components for a return to work. Other treatment modalities that can be used in conjunction with VLLLT are Extracorporeal High-Energy Shockwave Therapy (ESWT), Platelet-Rich Plasma (PRP), and Interleukin-1 Receptor Antagonist Protein (IRAP). Your veterinarian can prescribe a treatment protocol and rehabilitation recommendation that will work best for you and your horse. 



JILL TODD, DVM, HAS A MOBILE EQUINE INTEGRATIVE COMPLEMENTARY MEDICINE PRACTICE BASED OUT OF BELLEVUE, WASHINGTON, AND ALSO PRACTICES AT BELLEVUE ANIMAL HOSPITAL FOR DOGS AND CATS. SHE IS A RIDER, AND COMPETING IN HUNTER/JUMPER AND EQUITATION OVER FENCES IS ONE OF HER PASSIONS. DR. TODD WAS THE FACULTY ADVISOR FOR THE TEXAS STATE UNIVERSITY RODEO TEAM. SHE IS ALSO A CERTIFIED VETERINARY ACUPUNCTURIST (CVA), AND A CERTIFIED VETERINARY CHIROPRACTITIONER (CVCP). HER MAIN TOOLS ARE THE ERCHONIA PL5 COLD LASER, VOM ACTIVATOR, AND ACUPUNCTURE NEEDLES. DR. TODD FEELS THAT THE USE OF THESE TOOLS AND OTHER ALTERNATIVE MEDICINE TECHNIQUES, ALONG WITH HER HORSEMANSHIP KNOWLEDGE, MAKES HER UNIQUE IN THE VETERINARY MEDICAL FIELD. Jill.ToddDVM@gmail.com, ERCHONIA.COM OR JILLTODDDVM.COM.