



# Honeyvale Herbs

natural animal healthcare

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## African Horse Sickness (AHS), Encephalosis (EEV) and West Nile Virus (WNV) info:

The most important thing to remember in preparing your horse to best cope with viruses (including AHS, EEV and WNV) is to remember that the strength of your horse's immune system and overall strength of physiology is largely dependent on what you put into your horse for 365 days of year, and not just the supplement you boost them with when there happens to be an outbreak in your area...

**Diet is the first major consideration, so stick to the basic good feeding rules, which include the following:**

- **Feed a good quality long fibre based diet** (NB: this does not include beet pulp products, as their long fibres have been destroyed by being exposed to extremely high temperatures which chemically denatures the fibre from its natural form, and forces normally indigestible long fibres to become digestible. Long fibres in the diet are essential to maintaining a healthy digestive system, and a healthy gut wall is the first line of defence to protect the horse's immune system as a weaker gut wall will allow pathogens and toxins to directly enter the bloodstream through the gut wall). Feed ad lib (use slow feeder nets or trickle feeders if necessary, but always makes sure the horse is able to nibble on hay anytime they like) the best quality hay you can afford (must be mould-free) and preferably not too much oat hay as it's high in sugar...
- **Feed a low sugar diet.** Cut out all unnecessary grains and molasses in your horse' diet as they create an acidic pH in the body, and diseases (bacteria, fungi and viruses) in the body can only thrive in an acidic pH. For most horses in South Africa in moderate exercise (hacking, and lower level dressage and showjumping) a good quality balancer feed plus good quality chaff is all that is required to feed as a "concentrate" in order to provide a variety of minerals and vitamins in the diet. If the horse needs to add condition, supplement with brewer's yeast, cooked or freshly ground linseed or a good quality sunflower or rice bran oil (NB: Only feed extra oils or fats to the horse if you know they have a healthy liver, as horses excrete bile directly from the liver into the gut, so if their liver health is compromised they will struggle to digest oils and fats properly).

- **Cut out all unnecessary mineral/vitamin supplements.** If a balanced diet is fed they are not required anyway, and most mineral and vitamins are synthetically/chemically produced in isolate form, so are only poorly assimilated by the body, and if they accumulate in the body they can trigger an immune response from the body as they may not be recognized as nutrients.
- **Do not feed poor quality protein boosters** e.g. peanut husks and rancid soybean/canola/flaxseed products, as they are full of aflatoxins and carcinogens which are highly toxic. At high dosages these can be fatal, but at low dosages (i.e. slightly rancid) these feeds may temporarily seem to benefit the horse, boosting muscle mass and producing a shinier coat, but over time the liver will have to cope with absorbing their toxins out of the bloodstream, and will gradually become less efficient, leading to a compromised digestive system and reduced overall wellness as higher amounts of toxins circulate around the body through the bloodstream.
- **Always provide access to good quality fresh water.** If using borehole water, have it tested periodically. Quite often borehole water can be too high in iron and sulphur, both of which interfere with copper levels in the body, and adequate copper levels are essential to ensure a healthy immune system. If required, provide copper supplementation, either directly to the horse and/or as a top dressing to pastures. Excessive copper can be highly toxic, so do some research to find out what is best suited to your particular situation. Speak to your vet about injectable copper solutions if required. Natural feed sources of copper are a very safe way of providing additional copper in the diet; rich natural sources of copper include Rosehips (can be fed on an ongoing basis), Kelp and Paprika.
- **Do not overfeed or underfeed.** An overweight horse or pony will have additional cardiovascular strain whilst fighting a virus, an underweight horse or pony may not have sufficient stored energy to sustain them through the full course of the virus.
- **Feed a broad spectrum natural diet.** Try to feed a variety of different hays, grasses, herbs and some fruit and vegetables to your horse. Small amounts of a variety of grains and seeds are also beneficial, as the wider variety of natural feeds your horse has access to provides a wider variety of antioxidants and essential micronutrients in their diet. Oats are an especially good tonic, and in moderation are perfectly safe to feed. Merely feeding a beet pulp feed with a trace mineral supplement that contains only minimal variety of minerals and vitamins and may very well be nutritionally inadequate, as even some very popular "South African" trace supplements contain only a minimal variety of minerals and vitamins, and exclude some minerals that are commonly deficient in South African soils.

**Environmental management is the second major consideration:**

- **Cut out dips and chemical insect repellents as much as possible.** These are all toxic and even though they may not directly kill your horse, their toxins will gradually accumulate in the body and compromise the liver and immune system. If possible, swap out chemical insect repellents for natural ones, or fly sheets, including the ride-in ones. Use fly wasp biological control methods (and encourage your neighbours to as well), or fly traps around the stables rather than timer-based chemical sprays.

- **Replace plastic water drinking bins with stainless steel or enamel containers.** Plastics gradually leach toxins into the drinking water, especially if exposed to direct sunlight.
- **Use chemical dewormers only when necessary.** Avoid daily dewormers, and at certain times of the year broad spectrum chemical dewormers can be swapped out for herbal dewormers.
- **Detox the liver periodically.** All our horses are routinely exposed to vaccinations, dewormers and pollution, so an annual 2-3 month liver detox with a product like Honeyvale Herbs Liver and Blood Tonic is highly recommended, and for horses living in areas near vineyards and orchards with regular chemical spraying it is recommended that they have a 2-3 month liver detox twice annually. At any time of the year, any horse recently off the track, or rescued and being rehabilitated, or a horse that has had a severe illness or major surgery is recommended to have a full 3 month course of Liver and Blood Tonic as a precautionary measure. 2-3 months is recommended as it takes at least 6-8 weeks for silymarin (the primary active constituent in milk thistle seed) to detox and begin to regenerate the liver. Many herbs can support the liver, but silymarin is unique in its ability to detox and regenerate it. Three months is ideal as it is a full blood course i.e. every red blood cell in the body is replaced within a three month period.
- **Stabling from 2hrs before sunset through to 2 hrs after sunrise, and using 85% shadecloth to screen off all windows and doors.** Preventing access of the midges and mosquitoes to the horse in the first place is a no-brainer, provided you have suitable facilities. Fans or air conditioning also helps to move the air inside the stables, as the midges are weak fliers.
- **Be careful where you allow your horse to graze.** Some margin areas may be sprayed by the council or neighbouring farmers with herbicides or pesticides that can be highly toxic.

**What NOT to supplement:**

- **Wormwood, ANY variety except *Artemisia vulgaris*... (*Artemisia afra*, *Artemisia cina* and *Artemisia absinthium*):** Wormwood is a fine herb when used appropriately, but is ineffective as an antiviral, and worse still, is harmful to the liver when fed over prolonged periods. Any herbalist worth their salt knows that this herb should ideally never be used internally for more than four to five days consecutively, as it contains a volatile oil called thujone which accumulates in the liver. It has angered me intensely that this herb has been marketed in this country as an African Horse Sickness preventative, as it will do far more harm than good. This herb is an excellent anti-parasitic herb, both internally and externally, which is why it is highly useful as an anti-MALARIAL herb, as malaria is a PARASITIC infection, not a VIRAL infection like AHS, EEV and WNV!!!! Wormwood may have very limited benefit if fed for a few days as part of an AHS treatment, but this is purely for its appetite stimulating and anti-inflammatory properties, and there are other far more appropriate herbs that may be used for these benefits. *Artemisia vulgaris* is safe if it is supplied in professional blends, but it is a nervine herb, and will have no benefit in preventing viral infections whatsoever. In my opinion, feeding or marketing *Artemisia* as an AHS preventative should be banned outright!!!

- **Too much garlic, or shop bought rehydrated garlic:** Garlic fed at recommended dosages is useful, but like almost anything else, too much is harmful. The recommended dosage of dried granules for horses as a daily supplement is 15g, but this can be doubled to 30g for a few weeks if required. The garlic dosage for ponies is half of that for horses. Shop bought "fresh" garlic is not recommended because firstly these products are frequently diluted by the inclusion of turnip, and secondly, they usually aren't fresh at all, because it's just rehydrated dried garlic and the addition of water speeds up the oxidative process which destroys the nutritional and medicinal effects of this herb. Garlic granules are recommended in preference to the cheaper garlic powders, because the powder is usually the entire bulb of garlic bulb powdered – skins, stem and all – and is frequently also diluted with inferior products such as turnip.

#### **Why SO much emphasis on liver health?? :**

Because the health of every other organ system in the body is directly related to the health of the liver! If your liver health is compromised, so is your immune system, cardiovascular system, your kidneys, etc, etc, etc, and so is the blood and tissue quality throughout your body. The absolute last thing I would ever want my horse to go into a battle with the African Horse Sickness virus is with a compromised liver. The overall physiology of a horse will be affected, which means an increased likelihood of haemorrhage and oedema, which at the end of the day is what horses with AHS die of. Having a healthy liver and body as a whole will make the body able to withstand the ravages of the virus for a longer period of time, and provided it is given sufficient time, the immune system will be able to kill off the virus!

#### **Recommended Products**

##### **AHS, EEV and WNV "Prevention" Supplements:**

"Prevention" is put in inverted comma's because if a horse has not been exposed to the virus before and therefore has no immunity to it, the herbs cannot prevent the horse from contracting the virus. However by keeping the horse on a good diet, as well as supplementing with immune boosting herbs when necessary, the immune system will be stronger and better equipped to deal with the virus effectively, which can shorten the duration and decrease the intensity of the illness.

Recommended "Prevention" supplements (this is what our horses go on to when there is an increase in viral infections in the area – usually around late February/early March in Cape Town – or as soon as there is an AHS,WNV or EEV outbreak in our area):

- **Honeyvale Herbs Immu-Boost:** to stimulate and support the immune system. *Contains: Garlic, Rosehip, Nettle, Liquorice root, Siberian ginseng, Echinacea root and leaf.*
- **Apple Cider Vinegar** (30 ml daily for ponies, 50 ml daily for horses): ACV shifts the body's pH more towards alkaline, and diseases can only thrive in an acidic environment. Preferably a sulphur dioxide free brand.
- **Colloidal Silver:** As an additional immune enhancer. Is complementary to the herbs, as colloidal silver works specifically to disable the oxygen- metabolizing enzyme which one-celled bacteria, fungi and viruses use to reproduce themselves. The disease causing pathogen is therefore destroyed by suffocation. Dosage is 10ml daily for ponies, and 20ml daily for horses.

- **Brewer's Yeast** can be given additionally if desired, as it is rich in selenium and zinc which are essential for a healthy immune system, and it strengthens the mucous membranes and is a prebiotic.

### **African Horse Sickness Treatment Supplements:**

When the horse has been infected the treatment emphasis is on physiologically supporting the body through the process of the virus i.e. supporting the respiratory system, cardiovascular system, renal system, etc, thereby helping to prevent haemorrhaging and oedema and thereby giving the immune system a longer period of time to conquer the virus. The herbs are also anti-viral though, with an emphasis on immune system tonics i.e. herbs that are rich in micronutrients required by the immune system to keep functioning optimally even when under stress, these include: zinc; selenium; iron; copper; vitamins A, C, E, and B-6; and folic acid. Elecampane root is rich in calcium, and providing calcium intravenously is a known AHS supportive.

We would very much like to share what herbs we use in our AHS/Viral Support Mix, as we believe that **every** horse owner should have access to this information whether or not they buy our mix in particular...the most important thing for us is that horse owners have this information available to them so that they can get their horses onto these herbs ASAP when they need to, to save as many horse's lives as possible!!!!

- **Honeyvale Herbs AHS/Viral Support Mix.** To support the kidneys and cardiovascular system, to help prevent oedema and haemorrhaging, as an immune system tonic, as an alterative (i.e. an agent that helps to restore normal bodily function), as an anti-infective and as an amphoteric nervine (i.e. will support the Central Nervous System (CNS) by either calming or slightly stimulating as required, depending on whether the CNS is in a hyper or fatigued state). This blend can be fed straight by hand in cut form, as it is extremely palatable. Ideally though it should be made into a tea as this best releases the medicinal properties of the herbs, and has the added benefit of being able to be administered to horses and ponies that have otherwise already stopped eating and drinking. It can be made into tea (with a coffee plunger) allowed to cool to blood temperature or cooler, and administered in liquid form onto the back of the tongue. The tea will remain beneficial for up to 4 hours after brewing. The blend is available in a 1kg packsize and it contains: Elecampane root, Hawthorn berries and leaves, Yarrow herb, Dandelion herb, Nettle, Rosehips, and Echinacea herb and root. Horses can have 15g up to every 2 hours, and ponies 10g up to every 2 hrs. The herbs in this formulation have the following benefits:

**Elecampane root** is one of the primary herbs to use:

- Is a respiratory supportive, eases shortness of breath
- Is an amphoteric nervine (see above)
- Is an alterative (i.e. a tonic substance that helps to restore normal bodily function)
- Is diaphoretic (helps to sweat out a fever)
- Is a diuretic (supports the kidneys and encourages the intake of water)
- Is a cardiovascular supportive
- Is anti-ulcerative, and is a digestive/appetite stimulant
- Is a mild anti-inflammatory
- Is anti-convulsive
- Is a gentle energy tonic, helps to improve overall feeling of wellbeing

- Is a blood purifier

**Echinacea root and leaf:**

- Anti-viral, especially when used in combination with Elecampane root
- Boosts the immune system (specifically boosts white cell production)
- Anti-bacterial
- Mild anti-inflammatory
- Tissue healing

**Hawthorn leaves, flowers and berries:**

- Is a cardio-tonic
- Is vasodilatory
- Is a blood pressure normaliser
- Is antisclerotic
- Is rich in rutin, a substance that strengthens capillary walls and helps to prevent haemorrhaging
- Is rich in antioxidant flavonoids

**Yarrow:**

- Encourages the healing of burst blood vessels
- Is astringent
- Is diuretic (supports the kidneys and encourages regular water intake)
- Is a digestive stimulant
- Is a circulatory stimulant
- Is a mild anti-inflammatory specific for fevers

**Dandelion:**

- Is a tonic providing many nutrients, especially rich in potassium, magnesium and calcium
- Is a diuretic and mild laxative
- Supports the liver
- Is a blood cleanser

**Nettle:**

- Is a blood tonic
- Is a circulatory stimulant
- Is diuretic
- Is astringent
- Is haemostatic (stops or controls bleeding, including internally)

**Rosehips** (*are included in the blend, and should also be offered free choice as part of the treatment program*):

- Tonic rich in antioxidants and micronutrients, and are especially rich in vitamin C to help fight off an infection. Is an outstanding tonic for both the immune system and the blood)
- Rich in rutin (to help prevent haemorrhaging)
- Circulatory stimulant
- Astringent

- **Honeyvale Herbs AHS/Viral Anti-Flam tincture.** This should be given ONLY if the horse's temperature is elevated above 39.5C AND has stopped eating and drinking. An elevated temperature is part of the body's natural method of killing viruses, which is why it is best not to give

anti-inflammatories unless the horse has stopped eating and drinking AND their temperature is elevated. Dosage for horses is 2,5ml every 2 hours for up to 10 consecutive dosages, preferably give 3-4 consecutive dosages and then rest with supplementation for 10-12 hours. The tincture contains equal parts of Calendula flos (anti-inflammatory, blood tonic, astringent, heals internal wounds), Devil's Claw root (anti-inflammatory, mild sedative, supports the liver and stimulates the appetite), Meadowsweet herb (anti-inflammatory and astringent), Nettle herb (circulatory stimulant and kidney supportive) and Hawthorn leaves and berries tinctures (cardiovascular supportive). The tincture is available in a 100ml sized glass bottle with a screw cap.

- **Apple Cider Vinegar** (sulphur dioxide free) - Give 10ml diluted in 10ml water every 1-2 hours.
- **Colloidal Silver** - give horse 15ml AM & PM for up to 5 consecutive days, and ponies 10ml AM & PM for up to 5 consecutive days.

**Post AHS, EEV & WNV Support:**

- **Liver and Blood Tonic** - If the horse has survived a severe viral infection a 2 -3 month course of Liver and Blood Tonic can only be beneficial to help speed overall physiological recovery, particularly if there has been significant weight loss, as the liver would have been placed under tremendous strain in order to be able to cope with a large amount of broken-down proteins in the bloodstream all at once.