

## Chronic Pain – Injection Acupuncture of Neck and Back Utilizing Sarapin



It is normal for horses to be supple in the back and move away from manual pressure. Horses should wiggle their hind end and shift their pelvis comfortably when pressure is applied. The horse in [this video](#) is extremely back sore and almost collapses with light pressure. Chronic pain can arise from a primary source such as neck neuromuscular pain due to cervical spine arthritis or muscle spasm, or it can be secondary to compensation from another pain source such as back pain as a result of hock osteoarthritis. When neuromuscular pain becomes chronic it is much harder to manage and difficult to stop the continuing pain cycle.

Nerves are composed of several fiber types that all perform different functions. The C fibers are the portion mainly responsible for chronic pain and can get stuck in a constant firing cycle. In order to manage chronic pain, the root of the problem must be identified and addressed, as well as stopping the C fibers from firing. One of the ways we can stop the nerves from signaling and manage muscular and/or nerve pain is by using an injectable analgesic called Sarapin.

Sarapin is a product derived from *Sarracenia purpurea* (pitcher plant) that has been around for over 70 years. The exact mechanism of Sarapin is unknown but properties are thought to be the result of a selective effect on the C fibers. Sarapin acts on the sensory nerves without any effect on motor nerves, therefore the horse can feel and move the same (as nothing is 'numb'), however the C fibers are temporarily shut off allowing the nerves to relax and the body to 'reset.' Sarapin

is used by local infiltration by means of deep intramuscular injection (injection acupuncture or aquapuncture) near nerve roots and at trigger points. The treatment recommendations depend on the horse's symptoms. Some horses may need several weekly treatments or just one treatment in conjunction with other therapies for lameness such as joint injections. Some horses can also benefit from a maintenance program to ward off recurrence of chronic pain as prevention is best.

If your horse is suffering from a sore neck or back or you would like more information about injection acupuncture please contact our office.

