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Banish those winter skin problems naturally!

Skin problems can strike your horse whatever the season but with winter just around the corner, bringing more damp and wet weather, mud-related issues can be one of the most common problems affecting our horses and ponies.

easily recognised by the crusty scabs that form in matted areas of hair. The mud provides a home for the bacteria but when horses' legs are persistently very damp or wet and/or are damaged by mites, the skin is more susceptible to injury and so even just a small scratch can allow the bacteria to enter the skin and breed there. Of course prevention is always better than a cure, as once established, mud-



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Ruggles & Stopitall Ltd

In the NEWS

[**ZOOM NOTE:** To clearly see this text, please use the '+' keys on the top of this screen to enlarge it to 100% or greater]

All **blocked out** areas are text/names/descriptions that may contravene Veterinary Medicines Directorate (VMD) regulation; text within [] has been inserted by this office.

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www.equitradermagazine.co.uk

related issues can take some time to get rid of, but if your horse is affected, it is important to get the affected area dry and clean and apply preparations to get rid of the bacteria.

If possible, try not to clip the hair in the affected areas as Mother Nature put it there as a layer of protection, especially for the heavily feathered – you may need to work harder by retaining them but in the long run it will be better for your horse. Then bathe in a gentle, low lather, hypoallergenic shampoo, preferably one that does not contain any harsh chemicals such as Parabens, Lauryl Sulphate, or even Tea Tree, as these can cause further irritation. This will clean the area gently and will also help to soothe, soften and lift the scabs. NEVER pick off scabs...this will delay healing and leave the skin much more vulnerable to additional attack...we know this when we can't resist picking off our own scabs...it not only scars more but slows the healing. Make sure you rinse well and dry carefully with a clean towel – never rub the area. A hair drier can even be used on a very low setting to dry the area but use extreme caution using heat and electrical items around animals...remember animal skin is much more sensitive than human skin so heat can cause damage without us realising. However, there are products that now don't need you to dry the skin at all...so if in doubt, seek these out.

Your healing preparation of choice should then be applied and ideally should be antibacterial and antifungal, to kill off the bacteria. Depending on the product, you may be forced to keep the area dry for it to work...which can be challenging in a British winter!



is Ruggle-It from Ruggles & Stopitall. The oil and shampoo combination are natural and gentle and seem to work with the animal in its natural yet challenging winter environment rather than making high demands such as keeping the skin dry...the web testimonials are impressive.

With careful management and a suitable product plus lots of patience, your horse or pony should soon be back to health.

For further information call 01823 259952 or visit www.karenruggles.co.uk

