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### The most useful things!

Over the years I have tried a lot of products and some will always work better than others... so to save you some time, here is what I have found:

Whenever your horse has lost hair due to a rub, cut or other minor incident, I find Calendula helps the hair grow back the fastest. You can get some at your local health food store.

When your horse has a cut I haven't found any better ointment than 'Panalog'. It's an antibiotic ointment you can get from your vet. It is a miracle for any wound, for scratches, or for something that looks like it may get infected. It can test at competitions, as it is a medication, so always consult your vet before you use it and check how long before you show that you should be washing it off. Also DermaGel is great for wounds and keeping dirt out.

A spray bottle of vinegar is very handy for after baths to keep coats shiny and also for preventative use against scratches when you are getting legs wet a lot like we tend to do in the summer months. Vinegar is a natural antiseptic that can help minimize irritating scratches and so on.

For a horse with boot rubs I have two solutions: First, use Veredus boots with the leather lining for jumping, and 'Heidi' boots for flatting (the side-closed, sheepskin lined soft vinyl boot). The leather in the Veredus is smooth and so doesn't encourage rubs. The 'Heidi' boots don't cover the back of the ankle at all, so there is nothing to rub this common area for rubs. Secondly, if this isn't enough, I leave a patch of hair long on the back of the ankle to act as another barrier.

For a foot suffering from thrush, I have found penicillin used topically works the best to clear it up. Squirt a little penicillin into the crevasses of the frog (the specific area that thrush is present). Again, note this is a medication that should be used with the consultation of your vet to make sure it's right for your horse, and to ensure you will not test at a competition.

When you are clipping in the winter, be sure to give your horse a bath right away afterwards! Even though it's cold outside, it's important to wash the little hairs off so they don't irritate the horse's skin and to make sure they don't get stuck forever in your horse's stable blankets! Also when you bathe the horse, soap up as normal, then when they are all rinsed off fill a bucket with warm-hot water and add 2 tablespoons of mineral oil. Sponge this mixture onto the horse's coat. Bundle your horse up with 3-4 coolers so they heat up. Stay with them in case you make them too hot. When they are dry after an hour or so, you should notice an extra shiny coat and most of the clipping lines should disappear already!

To keep your horse's legs tight after jumping, I recommend a long cooling out period after a jump school, followed by a good grooming. Then I would suggest another hand walk before putting bandages on their legs, and again one more hand walk at the end of the day.

Jumping on grass is great fun, but corking is not. Use the white cork hole stuffers to save time and to keep you from getting stressed out before your ride!

Look after your wool blankets well – if they get dirty, they won't ever come back from a dry cleaner the same!

When you wash polo wraps or standing bandages, tie them in a bow in sets of 2. They won't get nearly as tangled in the dryer!

When cleaning tack, be conservative about how much saddle soap you use – overuse of soap makes the leather sticky and can expedite its breakdown.

Use SOS pads to clean spurs or bits. Or the dishwasher works really well too!

Orvus shampoo and Ivory dish soap are the best for getting your equine partner clean. They are also very inexpensive! Gallop brand color-specific shampoo is also great for bringing out the glimmer in your chestnut and black horses especially.

Ogilvy pads wash really well, keep their color, and are super soft on the inside!

I would suggest sharpening your clipper blades only once after buying them new. After that, it seems just as efficient to get a new set of blades that will last much longer than a re-sharpened set.

Sore No More is a great liniment, as is Traumeel! These two products are great under bandages and help keep legs tight. I also put aloe gel on everything – stifles, knees, withers, and neck. I massage aloe gel into anywhere I think the horse is sore.