

# **Animal Dynamics Equine Sports Massage Foundation and Advanced Program Curriculums**

Created and Presented by Don Doran

## **Introduction**

This class has value for amateur owners as well as seasoned professionals.

Muscular Pain is the #1 cause of most equine behavior and performance problems. Properly preformed, Equine Sports Massage resolves many muscular problems, improves performance, increases flexibility, increases range of motion and helps resolve behavior problems.

In our Foundation Equine Sports Massage Program, students learn:

- Functional equine anatomy and how the horse is designed to move
- How to see the horse in training as an athlete, who naturally incurs muscular tension as part of the training program
- How to evaluate whether a horse's muscles are healthy or painful
- Specific key muscles, including:
  - the origin, insertion and action of each muscle
  - How the muscle presents when there are problems
- How to perform different modalities to relieve painful muscles and promote the health and well-being of the horse
  - Effleurage, Petrissage, Neuromuscular Triggerpoint Therapy, Cross Fiber Friction, Compression, Tapotement, Jostling, Vibration
- How poor training practices and improper equipment prevent the horse from moving naturally and can create serious muscular and behavioral problems
- A new way to communicate directly with the horse via touch and the medium of horse massage

This course empowers students with new information and skills that enable them to achieve maximum success, performance and personal fulfillment with their horses.

This course is a first step for individuals pursuing careers in the Equine Industry as Equine Sports Massage Therapists or Equine Bodyworkers.

Students must be at least 18 years of age and must have horse handling experience.

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This course is a combination of class room lectures and hands-on practice. There is an academic component to the learning process as well as an experiential component.

Equine Sports Massage is a tactile craft. Like any craft, it must be properly practiced in order to be mastered. Students must learn the academic information, practice on their own to develop the basic hand skills and improve their abilities under the direct supervision of an experienced instructor.

The Foundation Equine Sports Massage Program is a total of 35 hours. After successful completion of the Foundation Program, students are strongly encouraged to attend the Advanced Equine Sports Massage Training.

Educated Minds and Hands make the difference between a "feel good rub" and a Professional Equine Sports Massage Therapy Session. The effectiveness of the Equine Sports Massage Therapy Session is dependent upon:

- Correct Evaluation
- Use of Proper Techniques
- The Skill Level and Experience of the Practitioner

When students complete the Foundation Program, we are available for telephone or email consultations to assist with any questions that may arise from any of their Equine Sports Massage Therapy sessions.

We offer the following advanced training programs:

Advanced Equine Sports Massage Therapy

Equine Acupressure & Tui-na Massage Therapy

Introduction to Traditional Oriental Herbal Medicine for Horses

Advanced Equine Herbal Medicine Dit Dow Jow Class

Electro-Acupressure & Electro-Muscle Therapy

English Saddle Re-Flocking & Basic English Saddle Fit

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**Equine Sports Massage Foundation Program Overview**

1. Students will participate in 5 days of on-site training (35 hours).

The on-site training starts on a Monday and runs through Friday. Classes start at 9:30 am and end at 4:30 pm. Students have a 30 minute lunch break each day.

Morning sessions are devoted to lectures in the classroom and afternoons are devoted to demonstrations and supervised hands-on work in the field. Our field trips give students the opportunity to work with a variety of athletic performance horses that are in active training.

Each day of the program builds upon the previous day. Students develop their palpation and therapy skills with each afternoon practice. In the labs students are encouraged to focus on locating and working with the muscles covered in class that morning. As new muscles are introduced each day, students will become familiar with the new muscles and review muscles covered on previous days.

Included in the cost of the course is the equine anatomy book and daily class notes.

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## **Equine Sports Massage Foundation Program Details**

### **1. Day 1 - Lectures**

- a. Welcome and Introductions
- b. Origins of Massage for Humans and Animals
- c. Equine Sports Massage – A Tool for Equine Professionals
- d. Massage Modalities
- e. Western & Eastern View of Complementary Therapies
- f. Muscle Composition
- g. Physiology of Muscles and Muscular Problems
- h. Functions of the Muscular System
- i. Causes of Muscular Injuries
- j. Long Term Problems Caused by Muscular Injuries
- k. How Muscular Injuries Affect Performance
- l. How Muscular Injuries can be Prevented
- m. Benefits of Massage
- n. Regional Soft Tissue Problems
- o. Anatomical Terminology
- p. Directional Terms
- q. Connective Tissue
- r. Basis for a Good Equine Massage Therapist
- s. Contraindications for Massage
- t. Different Types of Equine Sports Massage
- u. Massage Strokes and Principles
- v. Anatomical Glossary
- w. Initial Observation and Confirmation
- x. Body Reading the Horse

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**2. Day 2 – Lecture and Field Work**

- a. The Equine Skeletal System(8 hrs)
  - i. Categories of Bones
  - ii. Composition of Bone
  - iii. Joints
  - iv. Ligaments
  - v. Equine Skeleton – All Individual Bones
  - vi. Palpation Points and Bony Landmarks
  - vii. Field Work – Demonstration and practice. Palpating the skeletal bony landmarks on live horses and practicing equine sports massage techniques.
  - viii. Equine Massage Strokes Practice Lab

**3. Day 3 – Neck Muscles Anatomy and Kinesiology**

- i. Morning lectures and discussions
  - 1. Brachiocephalicus
  - 2. Cervical Trapezius
  - 3. Cervical Rhomboids
  - 4. Splenius
  - 5. Cervical Serratus
  - 6. Rectus Capitus Ventralis
  - 7. Multifidus
- ii. Afternoon demonstration and hands-on practice

**4. Day 4 – Shoulder Muscles Anatomy and Kinesiology**

- i. Morning lectures and discussions
  - 1. Cranial Superficial Pectoral
  - 2. Caudal Superficial Pectoral
  - 3. Cranial Deep Pectoral
  - 4. Caudal Deep Pectoral
  - 5. Supraspinatus
  - 6. Infraspinatus
  - 7. Deltoid
  - 8. Triceps
  - 9. Teres Minor
  - 10. Brachialis
  - 11. Thoracic Trapezius
  - 12. Thoracic Rhomboids
- ii. Afternoon demonstration and hands-on practice

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**5. Day 5 –Back Muscles Anatomy and Kinesiology**

- i. Morning lectures and discussions
  1. Thoracic Serratus
  2. Latissimus Dorsi
  3. Longissimus Dorsi
  4. Iliocoastal
  5. External Intercoastals
  6. Abdominal Obliques
- ii. Saddle Fit Awareness Lecture and Discussion
- iii. Afternoon demonstration and hands-on practice

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Students are strongly encouraged to follow up this Foundation Equine Sports Massage Course with our Advanced Equine Sports Massage Program. Highlights of the Advanced Equine Sports Massage Program include:

- Review of all muscles presented in the Foundation Equine Sports Massage Program
- Advanced anatomy: Deeper muscles of the hind quarters, muscles of the hind leg, muscles of the fore leg.
- 22-Point Quick Evaluation Technique
- Charting and Record Keeping
- Foreleg Stretching
- Equine Polarity and Equine Cranial Sacral
- Equisports Massage Unit
- Laser Therapy
- Observation & Evaluation of each student's muscular evaluation skills and equine sports massage therapy skills with recommendations for improvement.
- Practice cases to sharpen student's equine evaluation skills:
  - Overall muscle structure
  - Hooves
  - Skeletal confirmation
- Massage field work under instructor's supervision to improve student's equine sports massage skills.

### **Remember:**

Equine Sports Massage is a craft. It must be properly practiced in order to be mastered.

Educated Minds and Hands make the difference between a "feel good rub" and a Professional Equine Sports Massage Therapy Session. The effectiveness of the Equine Sports Massage Therapy Session is dependent upon:

- Correct Evaluation
- Use of Proper Techniques
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Our Foundation Equine Sports Massage Program is the beginning of a wonderful journey of learning.