

Imprint First Horseshoe Improves Gait and Comfort

An independent study has shown that Imprint First can significantly improve the gait, and perceived comfort, in obese ponies.

The in vivo trial carried out by a team led by Janneke Sleutjens at Utrecht University Department of Equine Sciences studied hoof kinetics in a group of ten Shetland ponies both before and after application of the frog-supportive mouldable glue-on shoe. This is the first study to demonstrate a significant effect of body condition scoring on hoof kinetics.

Ten Shetland mares were divided into two groups of five; normal and obese, and were given a routine foot trim by university farrier Jan de Zwaan. The ponies were led at walk and trot over a force plate and dynamically calibrated pressure plate immediately following trimming and again 72 hours after the application of the thermo-plastic Imprint First shoes.

Whilst the normal weighted ponies moved more smoothly and evenly, the obese, hyperinsulinaemic, ponies were noted to move more 'carefully' by demonstrating a shorter stride and stance phase and increased loading of the heel region compared with the toe at both walk and trot—discomfort commonly associated with a sub clinical stage of laminitis. Immediately following application of the Imprint shoes the gait within the 'normal' group didn't alter significantly but the obese ponies gait improved with less heel landing and a longer stride and stance phase. During the 72 hours following application of the Imprint Firsts the obese ponies gait improved further and became more fluent and comfortable and similar to the normal weighted ponies. The results clearly demonstrate that the fitting of the Imprint Firsts appear to have a beneficial effect in aiding comfort in these obese ponies.

The nail-less Imprint First shoe provides maximum support from its heart-bar design whilst still allowing natural movement of the foot. It is the only mouldable shoe designed specifically for the early treatment of laminitis providing immediate relief and inhibiting descent of P3. Andrew Poynton FWCF, Managing Director of Imprint Equine Foot Care, was delighted to hear the team in Utrecht had chosen to use Imprint First for the study. "This study carried out by Dr. Sleutjens and her team confirms objectively just some of the effects of using the Imprint System. It is heartening when others independently obtain such positive results following correct application of the shoe.

The research demonstrates that the Imprint shoes can make a significant difference to the obese, potentially sub-clinical laminitic; the results are visible and positive and improve with time."

The full research paper has been accepted for publication in the Equine Veterinary Journal and may be read and downloaded from <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/evj.12814/full>



Foot fitted with Imprint shoe



Imprint First - solar view



Welsh pony with Imprint shoes