

A New Medication for Navicular Disease: OsPhos

OsPhos is an FDA approved, injectable bisphosphonate solution labeled for the control of clinical signs associated with navicular syndrome (caudal heel pain) in horses four years and older. OsPhos inhibits bone resorption (disappearance) by inhibiting cells called osteoclasts. Osteoclasts make and secrete digestive enzymes that break up or dissolve the bone tissue. By stopping osteoclast activity, OsPhos slows bone degradation.

Clinical trials conducted by Dechra in order to comply with FDA testing requirements found that 75% of horses treated with OsPhos showed a significant reduction in lameness by 56-days post injection.

Are there side effects? Yes, but they are minimal. One in 10 horses showed signs of abdominal discomfort (pawing, fidgeting, cramping) about 2 hours post-injection, but got over it after a 15 minute walk. Some were given a dose of banamine, but none had serious or lasting reactions. If your horse receives OsPhos and shows any side effects, please call Select Equine Veterinary Services immediately to report the effects. We do NOT recommend giving banamine to your horse unless specifically told to do so by your veterinarian.

How is it given? OsPhos is administered by a veterinarian as three 5 cc intramuscular injections given in three locations on the body all at once. By comparison, Tildren is given by a veterinarian through an IV catheter slowly over 90 minutes. They can be given every 3 to 6 months depending on the severity of the lameness, but ultimately should only be repeated as needed when signs of lameness recur. Some horses may only need it once, while others many need it two or three times per year. Blood work to check for renal (kidney) disease is highly recommended prior to giving either OsPhos or Tildren.

How do they compare? In many ways, OsPhos holds its own against Tildren:

- OsPhos currently costs much less than Tildren.
- OsPhos was only recently FDA approved this fall. Tildren was FDA approved 1 year ago in the USA but has been used for years in Europe with great success.
- OsPhos can be given intramuscularly while Tildren has to be given intravenously. In addition, Tildren has to be given slowly IV over 90 minutes.
- OsPhos shows similar results to Tildren in terms of reduction in lameness and in time of onset. Tildren definitely exerts a long term effect, with many owners reporting that it reaches full performance 3 months following administration and continues to work for years thereafter. Because OsPhos is so new, we will have to wait and see how it measures up to Tildren over the long haul.

We now carry OsPhos. We do not dispense this medication and we need to have a current diagnosis with your horse before administering it.