

Information on Jiaogulan by Claire C. Cox (Shotgun Equine Nutrition)

A little background:

Jiaogulan (*Gynostemma pentaphyllum*) is a plant native to Southeast Asia, it is well-known for the amazing health benefits that it offers humans. However, there are many ways in which this herb can be beneficial for a horse and has shown promising results when used under the appropriate circumstances.

In March of 2006, at the third European Equine Nutrition and Health Congress, in Gent, Belgium, Dr. Eleanor Kellon introduced the "Use of the Herb *Gynostemma Pentaphyllum* and the Blue-Green Algae *Spirulina Plentensis* in the Horse"

For Laminitis

The adaptogen Jiaogulan has a potent vasodilating effect & less cardiac stimulation than ginsengs. It has been found to be very effective in healing laminitis because it supports circulation to the hooves, it also supports healthy immune responses, muscular function, circulation, and respiratory function.

Laminitis that is caused by hormonal disruption/IR is not inflammatory and does not involve enzyme activation. There is a strong vascular component, with constriction of the vessels.

NSAIDs (Bute, Banamine, Equioxx, etc.) are primarily given for inflammation. Studies have shown that these NSAIDs in fact interfere/slow down healing. Not to mention long term side effects/complications, which we won't discuss here.. NSAIDs can be administered in the acute stages of laminitis (first 24-48 hours) and then discontinued & Jiaogulan can be started to aid in healing.

Before using Jiaogulan & for maximum effect & success it is very important that the following are addressed & in place:

-) treatment and control of Cushing's Disease (PPID), with pergolide if that is a factor.
-) a mineral balanced diet is best to give your horse the necessary building blocks for healing, etc.
-) if horse is Insulin Resistant, need to make sure the entire diet is low sugar/starch, under 10% combined
-) make sure hoof trim is mechanically correct, Jiaogulan will have no effect if pain originates from mechanical factors because the trim is incorrect/unbalanced.

The following may reduce the effect of Jiaogulan and should be avoided:

Ginsengs and other herbs that have some nitric oxide stimulating potential, such as Hawthorne, Grapeseed, Resveratrol, NSAIDs (bute, Banamine, Equioxx, etc.), anti-inflammatory herbs such as Devil's Claw, possibly also Boswellia, Curcumin since it is unknown if their effects are selective for inflammatory nitric oxide pathways.

Potential Drug Interactions

Jiaogulan, like any herb with the potential to alter the way the body functions, is a drug. There is the potential for a horse getting Jiaogulan to have an exaggerated reaction to drugs which lower blood pressure, such as tranquilizers/sedatives or general anesthetics, and drugs or herbs which influence blood clotting.

Dosage

There is wide individual variation in effective dose, with horses often more sensitive to the effects than ponies, older horses tend to be even more sensitive as well.

Starting dose:

Older horses, $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp twice a day

Younger horses and ponies: $\frac{3}{4}$ tsp twice a day

Jiaogulan should be given twice a day, on an empty stomach, 20 minutes before feeding anything in the morning, preferably at least an hour between dosing in the afternoon/evening and when the horse last ate. Again, do not feed for 20 minutes after the second dose of the day. Most horses enjoy the taste and will lick up a paste of Jiaogulan and water from a bowl. If not, can syringe it in, or put it in a tiny mouthful of beet pulp, unsweetened applesauce or flax. I personally make paste with unsweetened applesauce or strained baby food carrots and sandwich it between two Beetebite cookies. Voila! a Jiaogulan oreo cookie.



Signs that an effective dose has been reached include:

-) Pinker color to the gums and tongue (check this before you start giving it)
-) Brighter, more alert attitude
-) More energy, spontaneous movement
-) Improved foot comfort, lower pulses

If these changes are not seen within 3 days, increase the dose in ¼ tsp increments.

Note: Horses that are harboring unresolved abscess collections frequently begin to drain within the first week or two of starting Jiaogulan.

Recently, there has also been very positive effects in horses with anhidrosis.

"Just want to add here that every time I have seen it work it takes a few weeks. This makes sense if the adaptogen properties are responsible. The main theory of anhidrosis (which may not be this simple in a PPID horse) is that overexposure to adrenaline released as a result of the heat stress desensitizes the sweat glands. Adaptogens work by moderating the response to stress. This could reduce the over stimulation and give the glands a chance to recover.

However, I have absolutely no idea if that is actually what happens. Adaptogens helping does make sense though." Quote by Dr. Eleanor Kellon (Main ECIR list-7-14-18)

You can buy Jiaogulan powder in several places, but I recommend these two:

<http://mybesthorse.com/>

<https://uckele.com/jiaogulan-powder-1lb-bag.html>

Links:

<http://thenaturallyhealthyhorse.com/jiaogulan-horses/>

<http://www.all-natural-horse-care.com/jiaogulan-for-horses.html>

<http://jiaogulan.com/jiaogulan-horses-laminitis-gynostemma-pentaphyllum.htm>