



Equine Iridology; A valuable tool

By Lisa Ross-Williams

The eyes are the window to the soul...This is a very common saying, however what some don't know is the eye, or iris to be exact, can also be a mirror of the body's health, whether human or animal. By analyzing the various spots, flecks, lines and discoloration in the horse's iris, potential health problems and imbalances can be determined and corrected.

Although the Greek physician Hippocrates was said to have looked to the eyes for signs of illness, it wasn't until iridology was rediscovered in the late 19th century by Ignatz von Peczely, a Hungarian physician and Swedish clergyman Nils Liljequist. Legend has it that as a boy, Peczely captured an owl and during the commotion, the owl broke its leg. Peczely noticed an odd mark shortly appeared on the owl's iris and as the wound healed, the spot changed.

In 1950, Dr Bernard Jensen, DC, PhD, pioneered iridology in the U.S. and developed a grid which mapped out the various organs and tissues and their location on the human iris. Although this grid loosely correlated to the horse, it wasn't until recently that a specialized grid was developed for the equine.

Iridology is the reading of the iris (colored part of the eye) for imbalances in the body. Essentially, the iris is a "blueprint" of the tissues and organs and can demonstrate areas and stages of inflammation as well as the healing process. Each part of the iris correlates to areas of the body with the left eye corresponding with the left-side and the right eye with the right.

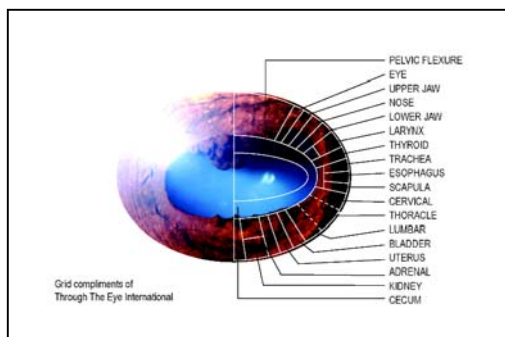
Issues show up as spots, flecks, streaks, lines and texture changes in various colors and shades. Iridologists believe these signs are formed due to the thousands of nerve endings attached to the optic nerve as well as the base of the brain and every tissue & organ in the body. The iridologist then uses a specialized grid to correlate the markings to the location in the body. It should be noted that iridology is not a true diagnostic technique in that it cannot determine

specific diseases, only imbalance within the body and changes to those conditions.

Iridology Use in Equines

Thanks to the fantastic work by Naturopath Mercedes Colburn and Dr Dena Eckerdt, DVM, iridology is quickly becoming an integral part of preventative horse care. According to Mercedes, “The markings of the iris represent a detailed picture of the body’s integrity in areas such as constitutional strength, areas of congestion, toxic accumulations, digestive health and inherent strengths and weakness.”

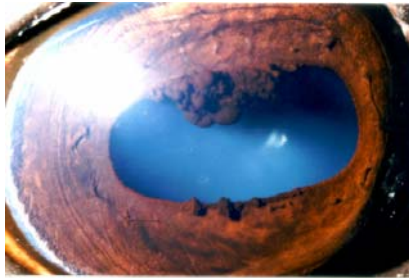
Either using a sophisticated camera and taking a picture of the horse’s iris or using a penlight and documenting the signs on an eye diagram, the iridologist then compares the findings to the Equine Iridology Grid. This equine grid, developed by Dr Colburn and Dr Eckerdt, took almost 10 years to finalize while charting hundreds of horses and using a double-blind system of testing and follow-up veterinary exams. A dog and cat grid has also been recently developed.



This grid which is shaped like an iris is sectioned off and labeled with the corresponding area of the body. It’s interesting to note that the iris is setup in the same order of the body. For example, moving in a clock-wise direction around the pupil, it starts with the head, moves down and through the internal areas and organs and back up toward the head once again reaching the top.

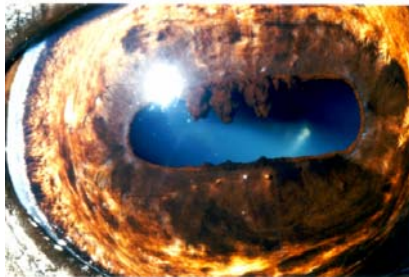
Not only can those who study iridology see where tissue damage or imbalance is, but also the degree of damage and whether it is recent or older depending on the color of the sign and the smoothness of the iris. According to Dr Colburn there are four stages of inflammation and a corresponding color.

- **Acute** which shows up in as a white spot or line and is often a painful issue.
- **Sub-Acute** is yellow in color and still often painful to the horse.
- **Chronic** is presented by being gray in color and often indicates a less painful older issue.
- **Degenerative** showing dark gray or black signs indicate long-term, often more serious issues such as toxicity or a deficiency.



Comparison between two senior horses

Top: A very active horse living a natural lifestyle with owners who love him.



Bottom: A working ranch horse with painful chronic injuries with little human contact except for work.

Through the Eye International

Although iridology is a valuable tool used to detect underlying signs of imbalance, often before physical signs show up, it is then up to the caregiver to take appropriate actions to correct the issues. According to Dr. Colburn, “the main issues seen in horses today is in regards to improper worming and feeding practices as well as continuing to work a horse before injuries have been corrected or healed.” Even non-physical problems such as stress, which can lead to physical issues, can be seen in the horse’s iris. Therefore, it is especially important to follow a holistic approach to correct any imbalance found and support the horse in every aspect of his life. This includes his nutrition, environment, handling, and even the discipline he is being used for.



So the next time you gaze lovingly into your equine partner’s eyes, take a closer look—they might be telling you more than you are aware of.

Through the Eye International offers a variety of educational materials, products and services. These include a study course, seminars, consultations, equine iridology book, and grids for horses, dogs, and cats.

www.equineiridology.com

About the author: Lisa Ross-Williams is a natural horse care consultant, freelance writer, clinician, and host of the **If Your Horse Could Talk** show. Lisa has immersed herself in extensive research, hands-on experience, and attending many clinics and seminars including natural horsemanship, hoof care, massage & stretching, essential oils, animal communication, iridology, and nutrition. She has completed the Basic Veterinary Homeopathy course through the British Institute of Homeopathy and working on her certification course in Iridology. Her herd of six have been some of her best teachers.

Lisa has dedicated herself to educating horse owners to a more natural approach through her company, If Your Horse Could Talk, including her extensive website, www.naturalhorsetalk.com, the show webcasts, consultations, and clinics. She is a regular writer for both Natural Horse Magazine and Animal Wellness Magazine as well as a resident expert on the popular website www.allabout horses.com. She has positively influenced thousands of horse guardians and grateful horses by sharing this invaluable information.