CLINICAL EXPERIENCE OF POSTURAL AND PHYSICAL CONDITIONING OF THE HORSE – RIDER UNIT

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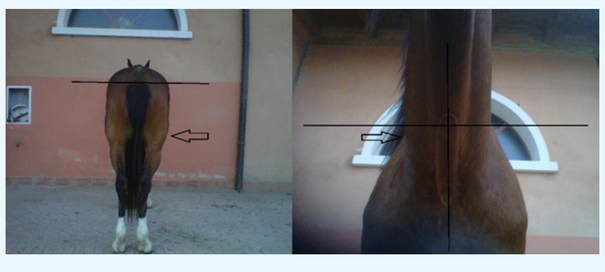
HYPOTHESIS

In the horse-rider unit both postural systems and biomechanical efficiency are reciprocally influenced.
An unbalanced rider unevenly loading her horse's supporting muscle chains, increased horse's own muscle load asymmetry.
Movement dynamics of the horse-rider unit was affected, further prompting rider's unevenness on the saddle: uneven load on seat and stirrups, overall balance and comfort, effectiveness of aids.

METHODS

HORSE	RIDER
1. POSTURAL EVALUATION	
muscular palpation left-to-right muscling comparison ROM evaluation white pad test visual documentation	kinesiology muscle-testing Fukuda/Adams/Side-bending Tests dental malocclusion check visual documentation Borg-scale questionnaires
2. ACTIVE SEPARATION	
bodywork myofascial release Kinesiotaping® 1 session/week for 6 weeks maintenance monthly sessions	dental bite device postural gymnastic yoga 2 sessions/week for 8 weeks maintenance weekly sessions
3. ACTIVE REUNION	



postural conditioning exercises
under saddle

RESULTS: retests after 4 months

HORSE	RIDER
bilateral muscling symmetry consistent bilateral muscle tone ROM increase	normotonic muscle chains fatigue perception decrease ROM increase

Reintroducing mounted work and including maintenance sessions in their routine, both athletes maintained the acquired balance.

CONCLUSIONS

Horse and rider reciprocally affect their posture.

Treating and conditioning them both individually and as a whole, improve and maintain comfort and effectiveness of the functional unit.