Stringhalt

What is stringhalt?
• Neuromuscular condition that causes gait abnormality
• Characterized by involuntary, exaggerated, upward movement of one or both hindlimbs
• 2 major categories:
  • Acquired: sporadic, often plant-associated, resolve on their own
  • Idiopathic: due to injury or trauma (improves once heals), or other unidentified causes in which cases do not resolve on their own

What you can do to keep your horse healthy:
• Proper management of pastures, paddocks and turnouts to prevent ingestion of toxic plants.
• Since other cause(s) of stringhalt are unknown, there is no way to prevent the idiopathic form.

Signs
Hyperflexion of one or both hindlimbs, especially at the walk

Causes
• Plant (flatweed/false dandelion) toxicity
• Injury or trauma
• Additional causes likely but have not been identified

Treatment
• No definitive treatment
• Remove from areas with toxic plant
• Surgery
• Muscle relaxants, anticonvulsants, tranquilizers

*If your horse needs medical care, contact the Large Animal Clinic at (530) 752-1393.