

Equine pastern dermatitis (EPD), commonly called scratches, mud fever, dew poisoning, gray heel, or cracked heels, can affect any breed. It can be very aggressive, even causing horses to become three legged lame.

What to watch for (in the pastern area):

- Swelling
- Redness
- Scaling
- crusting/matting
- Painful lesions

Causes:

- Bacteria
- Photosensitivity
- Fungus
- Chorioptic Mange

Treatment:

- Antibacterial shampoo regimen - bacterial
- Silver Sulfadiazine - bacterial
- Lime Sulphur dip - fungal
- Ivermectin -mites
- Leg wraps - protect against UV

Management at home:

- Keep horses off pastures with mud, water, or sand
- During wet weather, keep in dry stall
- Turn out after dew has dried
- Clip heavy feathers over the pastern
- Clean after exercise

If you have a horse prone to EPD, one of our vets would be happy to help you solve the root of the problem and recommend the best treatment plan!

Treatment protocol by CMVS vets:

1-Scrub off scabs with povidine scrub (may need sedation for this). Apply Entederm ointment. Either spray with Aluspray or apply a bandage.

If this doesn't work:

2-Locked up in dry lot for at least 2 weeks. Keep out of the sun.

Give 16 x SMZ TMP 960 mg tabs twice per day, mix with water in catheter tip syringe. Can mix with molasses and give like dewormer.

Wash with benzoyl peroxide shampoo twice per day for 10 days, lather and leave on for 10 minutes, rinse and dry. Then 2-3 times weekly.

End of first 10 days of shampoo:

Re-assess, if worse start using lime Sulphur dip. Mix with 1 gallon water and spray on and let dry

If Lime sulfur doesn't help after 5 days:

Silver Sulfadiazine cream can also be applied