

force and pain ensue because P3 is no longer sustained by the capsule's hydraulic system described earlier. Figure 5 demonstrates the degradation of the Supercorium's vascular system behind the hoof wall. As the wall moves away from P3, a gap forms which fills with blood, serous fluids, bacteria, toxic bacterial waste, phagocytes, and other debris. The lamina also become deformed, giving rise to the stretched white line so characteristic of this disease. If the attack is sufficiently severe, the capsule falls off and a temporary state of desiccation envelops the region as the Supercorium retreats to P3 (and other areas of attachment to the horse, as the case may be).¹ Significantly, the Supercorium is capable of regeneration as new capsule is laid from above by the sub-coria germinal cell matrices.

SUPERCORIAITIS AND THE NATURAL TRIM

Another laminitis myth, ironically fostered by elements of the “barefoot” hoof care movement, including horse owners themselves who simply pass around bad information given to them, is that a barefoot trim—particularly the “natural trim”—can “cure” the horse of Supercoriatitis (“laminitis”).

Nothing could be further from the truth. As stated in this document many times, Supercoriatitis is a “whole horse” disease caused by unnatural diet and unnatural feeding behavior. Unless those issues are aggressively confronted, and resolved, the horse's condition will not improve, but remain chronic. Natural trimming is not a “silver bullet”: it cannot right a harmful diet.

The function of the genuine natural trim (and I'm not talking about just any “barefoot” trim), is to aid the Supercorium in its efforts to restore a stable, naturally shaped hoof capsule for the horse to move and heal upon. *But the dietary causality must first be brought under control.* The natural hoof care practitioner simply shapes the healthy, new growth as it emerges from the germinal cells of the Supercorium (Figure 6). Just as is done with sound, healthy hooves.

Unnatural trimming practices, and shoeing, I do want to emphasize, can and do impair the natural healing processes. An unnaturally trimmed hoof, like the horseshoe (which causes hoof contraction²), obstructs the

¹Pollit has shown that another extracellular structure, the *basement membrane*, lies at the outer surface of the Supercorium (which he calls the “dermis”) like a layer of skin. The BM lies everywhere between the capsule and the Supercorium, and is intrinsically involved in the hoof-to-horse attachment mechanism. Significantly, BM retreats with the Supercorium when the attachment mechanism fails. For more on this, see my article, “The Supercorium,” Bulletin #110, SRP Natural Hoof Care Series

²See “Does Horseshoeing Cause Hoof Contraction,” Bulletin #111, SRP Natural Hoof Care Series

Richard Drewry/Jaime Jackson



Figure 6 This Supercoriatitic hoof is well on the road to recovery following a strict regimen of natural boarding and trimming, the latter conducted at 4 week intervals. (*top*) Before first trim; (*center*) 10 months later before 10th trim; (*bottom*) After 10th trim. The pony, previously completely lame, had been earmarked for euthanasia; now trots and gallops soundly. [Richard Drewry, AANHCP Practitioner]