



ArcEquine

Modern technology for equine health

Sitting around the kitchen table in the UK in 2002 and listening to his wife discuss her PhD in microcurrent therapy, Ian Thirkell had an idea. He'd worked with horses while protecting the Royal Family as a police officer and he knew of their frequent overuse ailments. What if this technology could be applied to horses to help heal soft tissue injuries and increase comfort for hard-working equines?

A few weeks later Thirkell read an article about a successful racehorse who had just suffered a career-ending total rupture of a superficial digital flexor tendon. Thirkell reached out to the trainer to see if he was interested in trying microcurrent therapy. At first reluctant, the trainer eventually decided he had nothing to lose. Ultimately, Thirkell treated 17 racehorses that had suffered catastrophic soft tissue injuries with microcurrent therapy alongside a dynamic, progressive rehab regime. "Of the 17 horses treated and rehabbed by us 14 returned to the racetrack," says Thirkell. The average

rehab time was 37 weeks and none of the horses sustained a reinjury to the treatment site.

From these stunning results, Thirkell has committed himself completely to helping horses and humans by developing accessible microcurrent technology for the past two decades. ARC Microtech was founded in 2008 with little more than Ian's idea to combine a love of research with a desire to make innovative equine healthcare wearable and affordable, and the first version of ArcEquine launched in 2012 in the UK and is now shipped worldwide.

Microcurrents are found naturally in the body and bioelectrical impulses are fundamental to all communications between cells, organs, and tissues. These electrical currents are vital to good health – not only in horses, but in all animals. Microcurrent therapy is drug-free, non-invasive, and well-evidenced. It has two predominant effects on the body: to reduce pain, swelling and inflammation, and to

facilitate tissue repair. This subtle approach is designed to stimulate cellular activity without causing discomfort, making it suitable for use in a wide range of situations.

Many equestrians have used the ArcEquine device alongside traditional veterinary medicine to manage conditions including laminitis, navicular, and arthritis in addition to increasing the recovery of soft tissue injuries such as tendon and ligament injuries.

Thirkell didn't invent microcurrent therapy, but merely transformed bulky equipment into a very consumer-friendly, accessible, drug-free solution to pain management and tissue repair. The equine model "targets ligament and tendon injuries and reduces inflammation and speeds up healing in addition to preventing re-injury" says Anna Fitzgerald, ARC Managing Director. For horses recovering from soft tissue injuries – strains, tendon injuries, or ligament issues, all common concerns in athletic disciplines such as show jumping, dressage, racing, and

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eventing – these effects can be particularly valuable. By encouraging circulation and cellular repair, the therapy may help horses with injuries return to work more comfortably and efficiently.

Testimonials from ARC users talk about impressive results. There are stories of speedy tendon recoveries, soundness after laminitis, healing of traumatic injuries and even a ten-year-old sarcoid falling off with no scarring underneath. Charlotte Dorey bought an ArcEquine for her mare when she had a suspensory injury in 2021. Dorey says, “She wore it religiously for 6 weeks and when the vet came out to scan her,

the hole in her suspensory had completely healed up.”

For horse owners, one of the most appealing aspects of the ArcEquine device is its simplicity. The unit is compact, portable, and easy to use. It’s typically secured to the horse’s leg using an integrated leg strap with a strap over the ARC to keep it in place if needed. Once attached, it delivers gentle microcurrents through pads on the reverse of the strap after applying a thin layer of ARC clear gel for conductivity. The device does not need to be placed near the area of concern, but will work through the whole body and target where it is needed most.

The horse can be in a stall or even a small paddock so it’s not necessary to confine the animal while it’s wearing the ARC. The device turns off automatically after each session and the battery lasts for up to 30 hours before recharging. The progressive programming has four levels that target

different aspects of healing. According to Fitzgerald, “The first program focuses solely on reducing inflammation and managing pain, the second starts to introduce the tissue repair. The third is a balance of both, and the fourth is predominantly tissue repair for the later stage of healing when dealing with tissue damage of any sort. The initial treatment is a standard six-week protocol – depending a little on the injury or condition – cycling through the programs. This is then followed by ongoing use for maintenance as-and-when required.”

After horse owners started witnessing the positive results on their equines, they used the device on themselves. In 2016, the Arc4Health for humans was launched using the same technology but specifically for people. Knowing that horse owners often overlook their own health while caring for their equines, the company made a device just for them. “We like to promote horse AND rider well-being,” says Fitzgerald. The Arc4Health, is designed for human limbs



rather than horse’s legs. Using it on humans has led to new discoveries in its human benefits like in the treatment of hard-to-cure ailments like long Covid and even periodontitis. After using the Arc4Health for a few months, Julie Birkle said her dentist insisted she must have started flossing more as her gums were healthy for the first time in years. “My periodontitis is in remission and my gums are healthy and the only thing I’ve changed is using my Arc4Health.”

The belief is that microcurrent therapy increases ATP (adenosine triphosphate) production which improves cell health resulting in better energy levels and reverses the crushing fatigue long Covid sufferers often experience. Lilas Bass bought an Arc4Health after being diagnosed with chronic inflammation from long Covid. “After a year of daily use, I can ensure it was a real gamer changer for me. It should be advised for any chronic disease and especially long Covid,” says Bass.

As awareness of advanced recovery techniques continues to grow in the equestrian community, devices like ArcEquine represent a broader shift toward science-driven, horse-centered care. By combining portability, ease of use, and non-pharmaceutical therapy, the ArcEquine device has positioned itself as a leader in the performance horse market.

The ARC is safe, effective and FEI compliant and can be used as often as needed, making it the perfect complement to a show barn’s routine. “It’s a great maintenance tool for competitions because it has an additional calming effect,” says Fitzgerald. “Pop it on the leg, and it will calm the whole body because it has a systemic impact.” Kirsty Shearer says this is an added benefit of the treatments. Her mare “seems to really enjoy the experience of wearing the ARC and goes into a trance-like, chilled out state during her sessions.”

Equestrians are always looking for non-invasive methods to speed healing, promote general health and improve performance. In a sport and industry where horse welfare is paramount, a tool like the ARC that promotes comfort, recovery, and wellbeing is an invaluable addition to every tack trunk. **HS**

For more information, including case studies, please visit arcmicrotech.com.