***LIGAMENT/ TENDON INJURY REHABILITATION PROGRAM***

Your horse has suffered an injury to a ligament or tendon in the lower leg. The rehabilitation program outlined below is designed to give your horse time to heal the ligament and return to performance. The initial part of the program is to give the horse time to begin healing the injury, and then to gradually return stress to the ligament or tendon while it is continuing to heal. This will stimulate remodeling in the ligament or tendon and build strength for a return to athletic exercise. Unfortunately, ligament injuries will not heal when the horse is turned out in a large area where the horse is allowed to run. Speed is the issue because the faster the horse runs, the more force it places on the ligament. Turning the horse out allows the horse to continue to irritate and inflame the injured ligament, and does not allow the healing process to begin. It is also true that some horses are difficult to rehabilitate because they do not handle confinement well. It is important to your horse’s riding future that you come as close to the rehabilitation program as possible, recognizing that some modification may have to be made for individual horses because of their attitudes and unwillingness to accept stall confinement.

1. The horse should be confined to a stall for the first 30 days. During this time, the horse can have 10 to 15 minutes of hand walking daily, the rest of the time the horse should be confined to a stall.
2. After 30 days, the amount of walking can be increased to as much as 45 minutes a day. During this time, the horse should continue to be confined to a stall.
3. After 60 days, the horse can be turned out into a small paddock (30’ x 30’). The horse should not be turned out into a large field for free exercise, nor resume any kind of regular training program until six months from the start of the rest program.
4. After the horse has been turned out into the small paddock, the horse can begin jogging; starting with a few minutes each day and slowly increasing the amount of time that the horse is jogged to 20 minutes a day.
5. At four months, if the horse is jogging sound, the horse can begin walk/jogs under saddle. However hills, rough uneven surfaces, and small circles are to be avoided.
6. If the horse is not jogging sound at four months, the horse should continue to be confined to the small paddock and have no more than 20 minutes of jogging a day until the horse is out six months from the start of the rest program.
7. The initial jogging should preferably be performed with no one on the horse’s back, either jogging in-hand or next to another horse.
8. After six months, the horse can slowly resume a regular exercise and training program.
9. Please call if you have any questions about the rest and rehabilitation program for this horse.