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### Rain Scald

Rain scald is a common skin disease we see all over the world. It is caused by a motile zoospore- similar to bacteria, called *Dermatophilus congolensis*. There are two main factors that play roles in the development of this disease: Skin damage and moisture.

- Skin damage can be caused by biting flies, prickly pasture or trauma
- Moisture due to heavy rain, especially ongoing rain for a few days, can cause spread of the disease across the body of the horse

The lesions are often seen as "mats" of hairs along the horse, where the scab easily comes off revealing red skin underneath. There is often pus between the skin and the scabs. The lesions are commonly located along the back and rump of the horse, as these are the areas where water pools during rain, but it can be seen around the fetlocks, pasterns and coronets due to muddy, wet paddocks. When it is located around the feet we tend to call it "Mud Fever".

The scabs can be painful, but not often itchy. If they are located on the legs we sometimes see swollen limbs and if really bad lameness can be present. In really severe cases, the horse may be depressed, have poor appetite, weight loss and fever.

To properly diagnose Rain Scald we recommend you have a vet come out and have a look for you. There are other diseases that may look like Rain Scald but needing completely different treatments, such as ringworm, sarcoids or trauma.

Treatment tips if you think your horse has Rain Scald:

- Keep your horse dry
- Remove the crusts and wash the skin underneath
  - o Use an *iodophore* shampoo such as Malaseb shampoo or Betadine solution
- If your horse is severely affected he/she may need antibiotics- call your vet for a visit
- Avoid further damage of skin: Use fly sprays and avoid risks of trauma to horses' skin

If you have any questions, need shampoos to wash your horse or would like to make an appointment, please call us on 9739 5244.

