

- In a 2010 study researchers showed that when the horse performs carrot stretches that round the neck – chin to chest, chin between the knees, and chin between the fetlocks – the joints at the top and the base of the neck move through a larger range of motion than they do usually, and the deeper positions also round the thoracic intervertebral joints, which could have clinical application in rehabilitation (TheHorse.com/19063)
- At the 2010 American Association of Equine Practitioners (AAEP) convention, one researcher showed that spinal manipulation and mobilization both increased spinal mobility in actively ridden horses (TheHorse.com/17533)
- Also at the 2010 AAEP convention, another presentation revealed that early mobilization after tendon injury produced a 60% improvement in Type 1 collagen deposition (which is evidence of healing) along with a 20% improvement in both the range of motion and the ability of the tendon to handle ground reaction forces (TheHorse.com/17841)
- A 2011 study revealed that five repetitions of 10 carrot stretches performed five days weekly for three months increased muscle size and tone in the deep muscles responsible for stabilizing the spine during locomotion. Strengthening these muscles could help decrease back pain in horses the same way it does in people (TheHorse.com/19063)
- In a study published in August, Clayton et al. found that three lateral bending exercises (chin-to-hip, and chin-to-hock) performed to both the left and the right increased the amount of bending in the caudal, cervical, and thoracolumbar regions of the spine, which indicated these exercises could help activate and strengthen the muscles used to bend and stabilized the horse's back (*Am J Vet Res.* 2012 Aug;73(8):1153-9) "Some vets have been very accepting (of physical therapy)," says Clayton. "In fact we now have a veterinary specialty in sports medicine and rehabilitation, and some of the colleges are now starting to train residents in that area."