

# IRAP - New Therapy for Arthritis

A naturally occurring chemical produced by the body, Interleukin-1 is the precursor of the inflammatory cascade that results in Degenerative Joint Disease (DJD). Produced by injured cartilage cells, its presence in the joint triggers the production of other inflammatory mediators that exacerbate joint disease. IRAP blocks Interleukin-1 from binding to its receptors, thereby halting inflammation and preventing further deterioration of the cartilage.

Blood drawn from the patient is incubated for 24 hours in a sterile device filled with glass beads. These beads increase the surface area for the horse's white blood cells to adhere. The white blood cells then secrete natural anti-inflammatory compounds, including IRAP, that are harvested for injection into affected joints. Getting anywhere from 5-7 doses per collection, they can be used immediately or frozen for use up to one year later.

Treatment involves 3 injections, given 7-10 days apart, with improvement usually seen after the 2nd injection. IRAP is most effective in cases with mild to moderate radiographic changes in the joint. There are several advantages for the use of IRAP vs. other intra-articular medications such as corticosteroids:

- It does not increase the risk of joint infection.
- It does not increase the risk of laminitis.
- It can be used in horses with other conditions such as Insulin Resistance and Cushings.
- It provides longer pain relief.
- It provides pain relief in joints that are showing a decreased response to other joint medications.