

# *Diet*

Free choice grass hay, salt block, mineral block, and water. Spread out the hay so that they have to move to eat.

Diet and movement probably play the biggest part in Natural Hoof Care. As a wild horse travels, they eat a tuft of grass, then walk, eat a twig, then walk, eat a leaf, and so on. They are always moving and browsing 15-20 hours a day. This is our goal with our horses. Feeding free choice grass hay, salt block, and a mineral block are a few of the ways we can prevent major hoof problems that plague our domesticated horses. It is very rare that, founder, navicular, thrush, and other hoof problems are ever found in the wild horses. Prevention is our goal. Less trips to the feed store is the best! Most horses do not need supplements and grains.

Pasture is high in sugar levels and is not the best choice for all day living conditions. Turn out to pasture only between the hours of three a.m. to ten in the morning. This is when the sugar levels are not as high. Because of photosynthesis the sugar levels in the grass drop down by the roots when the sun goes down, and then rise during the day when the sun is shining. So, when most people get home from work about 5:00p.m. they are turning their horses out to pasture to eat “twinkies”.

One of the best ways to feed horses is to turn them out to the pasture around 6:00a.m. in the morning and put them back in their paddock paradise about 10:00a.m. Then, using a slow feeder, allow the horse to eat grass hay the remainder of the day.

