The Effect of Classical Music When Grooming a Horse on the Neck and Withers after Exercise

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Lowering a horse's heart rate is critical in many different situations. This study investigated the effect of classical music when grooming a horse on the neck and withers after exercise. Prior research indicated grooming the neck and withers of a horse was more effective in decreasing heart rate than grooming other areas. To determine if classical music decreased the heart rate of a horse further, the horse's resting heart rates were taken before exercise with a stethoscope. The horses were then exercised for three minutes, followed by taking the heart rate. Initially, there was no music played after exercise, and the neck and withers were brushed for one minute. The heart rate was taken after grooming to record the decrease. The experiment was then performed again with the third movement of "Beethoven's Ninth Symphony" playing while the horse was groomed. Repeated testing and the analysis of data showed the horse's heart rates decreased more rapidly with music. The average difference in heart rate between grooming with classical music and grooming without was 9.23%. The p-value was .0011, which is very small (less than 0.05). Therefore, the data is statistically significant. Efficiently cooling down a horse helps prevent pneumonia as well as other conditions, redistributes the blood in the body, and assists riders in various riding competitions including endurance riding and leisure activities.

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