



## Manual therapies

**Although the veterinary physiotherapist has a variety of electro-therapy techniques at their disposal, it is their hands that are the vital tool.**

The veterinary physiotherapist has to have excellent palpation skills to identify differences in tissues and locate pain in an animal who cannot speak to say where they are in pain. This is why students of the National Association of Veterinary Physiotherapists spend a whole year learning to master palpation, massage and joint manipulation. In the picture is a group of student veterinary physiotherapists receiving instruction on palpation techniques.

Massage plays a key role not only in treatment of soft tissue injuries, but also in pre and post-competition work and also to soothe and relax the distressed or anxious horse. A number of techniques are used by the veterinary physiotherapist and most can

be relatively easily learned by owners making a positive impact on their animals.

Passive stretching is also very effective in all species and again is easily learned by the owner and is a regular tool used by the veterinary physiotherapist

Joint manipulation is also an extremely effective veterinary physiotherapy tool but it must only be practiced by the qualified veterinary physiotherapist as in untrained hands it can be very damaging.

