

Face & Head Wraps - Calming Bands

By Robyn Hood

Face and head wraps are another case where a TTouch training tool developed for one species is, with minor modifications, useful with other species.

They work in a similar way to the body wraps, but on the head instead. We mostly use them on horses and dogs, humans as well, but for different reasons with each species. As the various techniques are refined while working with one species they are usually transferrable back to other species.

They are not used to hold an animal's mouth shut but rather to bring 'awareness' to the area. Like all other TTouch wraps the Face Wrap is about giving 'feedback' to the area of the body which helps release tension. The result is usually a calmer, more focused, confident and grounded being.

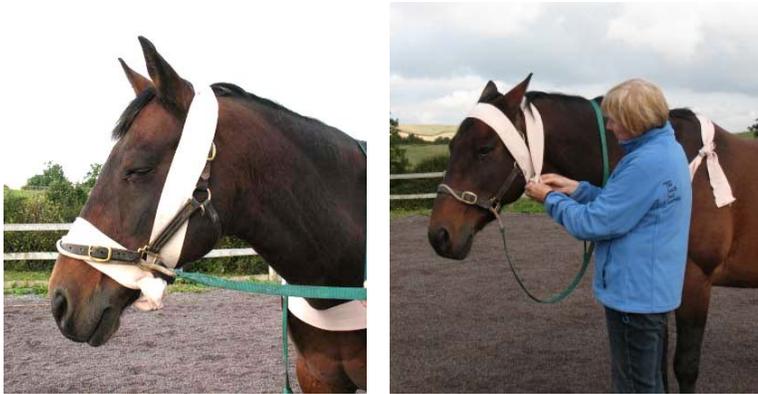
Humans: We have quite a variety of configurations to put a body wrap on a person with positive results and also find that head wraps are often very helpful. A simple 2" wrap around the forehead, like in the '60's headband, may have profound effects, from helping reduce the pain of a headache, encouraging the head to become more upright and over the spine; improving vision and just instilling a sense of well-being.

Horses: We first started using an elastic bandage or leg wrap

in a figure 8 around the muzzle and over the poll of a horse if it was difficult for him to accept handling in and around the mouth; or across the forehead with an ear shy or sensitive horse. We then added the face wrap to horses with neurologic damage such as EPM or with radial nerve damage and saw a positive response. With unsettled or unfocussed horses after applying a forehead wrap we often see the immediate response of the horse being quieter and more able to pay attention to the job at hand. We use a facewrap to prepare horses for wearing a fly mask and for those who don't like being bridled or having the rein taken over their heads. Don't be shy about letting your imagination guide you when placing the wrap. It can go between the ears and even briefly cover the eyes. You can keep a face wrap underneath the bridle when riding or doing ground-work.

Dogs: We first started applying a face wrap using a sewing elastic on dogs as preparation for a head collar in our effort to continually 'chunk down' a lesson. We found that not only did the face wrap provide a great step in helping dogs accept a head collar but there were other benefits such as:

- Acceptance of mouthwork
- Reduced whining
- Lessening vocalization in the car
- Help with panting during thunder and lightning or fireworks
- A must use for preparing a dog to wear a head collar or muzzle



Photos above: Left shows a face wrap which is placed over the horse's nose, cross under the jaw, goes up and behind the ears and tie ends together. Right: Forehead wrap goes over forehead, crosses under throat, behind ears and then tie together.

Photos right & below: Charlie is wearing a face wrap of black sewing elastic across his nose, crossed under his chin and then tied behind his ears.



Photo below: Forehead wrap: same configuration as with the horse forehead wrap. Sometimes you can just slide the nosepiece of a face wrap up to the forehead if a dog is not able to accept the elastic on his nose.



Calming Band: elastic piece over the nose a with nylon adjustable strap with a clip around the neck.



Right: Sushi, a Pom, has a very narrow elastic face wrap because of his short nose.



Above: the nosepiece of the Calming band is a bit wide for such a short nosed breed.

