



**KINSHIP CIRCLE**

ANIMAL ADVOCACY ▾ EDUCATION ▲ ANIMAL DISASTER AID  
KINSHIPCIRCLE.ORG ▶ KINSHIPCIRCLE.ORG/DISASTERS

# THE "P" IN PREMARIN STANDS FOR "PEE"



Mares and foals en route to slaughter are saved by Ellie Price, Madeleine Pickens and Lifesavers Wild Horse Rescue. *Santa Rosa Press Democrat, 7/15/10*

**PEE. YEP, PEE.** To acquire Premarin's "complex blend of natural estrogens," over 80,000 pregnant mares stand on pee lines in the U.S. and Canada. But you won't find urine listed on the bottle of this 60-year-old hormone replacement therapy. In fact, no one seems able to classify the mystery stuff inside Premarin, PremPro, PremPhase and PremPac.



Photo: Pregnant Mare's Urine Disguised as Osteoporosis Drugs? 1/6/09, Danielle Titand

"Because it is animal based, we don't know exactly what's in it...and you can't tell the horses what to pee," asserts Dr. Alan Altman, Harvard Medical School's assistant clinical professor of obstetrics, gynecology and reproductive biology. Last August Premarin manufacturer Wyeth-Ayerst, a division of American Home Products, endured its third recall. The FDA questioned the consistency of estrogen extracted from horses going to potty (estradiol yield can fluctuate nearly 400 percent from batch to batch) and the drug's ability to dissolve uniformly.

So how much pee is too much pee? According to a 2002 FDA report, continuing use of Premarin or Prempro can boost risk for "coronary heart disease (CHD), invasive breast cancer, stroke pulmonary embolism (PE), endometrial cancer, colorectal cancer, hip fracture, or death due to other cause." This data comes

from the Women's Health Initiative, a National Institutes of Health (NIH) study to assess risks/benefits linked with long-term use of Prempro and Premarin. On July 9, 2002 NIH abruptly halted its investigation and the government issued a cautionary letter about the drugs' potential hazards. The news shocked some 9 million women on HRTs for menopause and osteoporosis.

"Thanks to my late father, a drug made from animal waste is the most widely prescribed drug in the world today," writes Ron Wilson, son of Dr. Robert A. Wilson, the HRT guru who dubbed menopause a "living decay." In pursuit of the timeless woman, Dr. Wilson touted estrogen drugs as vital for reproduction after middle age. "Unfortunately," the younger Wilson says, "Premarin has a secret ingredient that my father had no trouble accepting: animal suffering."

Premarin comes from pregnant mares immobilized in cramped stalls at PMU (Pregnant Mares' Urine) farms. Re-impregnated within days of birth, their bodies generate estrogen over the last six months of each cycle. The mares are harnessed in fixed positions with limited exercise. Unable to shift direction or recline with ease, many suffer bloated, painful legs and exhaustion.

Rubber urine-collection bags strapped over their urethras lead to leg chafing and infected sores. To harvest urine with a high consolidation of estrogens,



farmers withhold drinking water. Renal and liver disorders are widespread among PMU mares.

Foals are snatched moments after birth to replace spent mares on the pee line or go to the slaughterhouse. Roughly 70,000 PMU castoffs wind up at auctions where most are sold to feedlots to fatten them for the overseas horsemeat trade. In Europe and Asia, prime equine cuts go for \$25 a pound.

Pre-weaned foals are trucked from auction to slaughterhouse in “double decker” livestock trailers overpacked with a perilous mix of stallions, geldings, mares, miniature horses, thoroughbreds, draft horses, ponies, donkeys, and mules. When fighting erupts, “the killer-buyer may wrap the horse’s muzzle with duct tape or bailing wire,” writes Cheryl Kucsera in *Premarin and Horse Slaughter: The Hidden Story*. “Often, unruly horses are deliberately blinded by gouging out their eyes or shooting them in the eyes with a BB gun.” During grueling treks, horses travel without food, water, or refuge from weather extremes.

Their last stop is the slaughterhouse. Ambulatory animals dismount first. The dead and dying are hauled from the trailer in chains. The killing room sputters impending death with a squash of dazed and moaning horses in full view for newcomers. A frantic PMU mare is prodded from her narrow chute through the knock box door. Staggering over blood, urine and manure, she struggles to balance as workers fire a metal shunt into her brain. She may need two or three shots from the captive bolt gun before she passes out.

Next, she is cast onto a conveyor belt, bound by a hind leg, and suspended upside down in the air. She remains alive, sometimes regaining consciousness, as her throat is slit. To render meat suitable for human ingestion, the horse’s pulsating heart must pump blood from her body.

For every 150 women who replace Premarin products with plant-based estrogen, one less mare endures the pee line — and seven or eight foals aren’t someone’s dinner. — **By Brenda Shoss**

## WHAT YOU CAN DO:

1. Do not take: Premarin, Prempro, Premphase, Prempac, Premelle, Aprela. Use cruelty-free natural options. Inform your doctor and other women.
2. Urge your doctor to prescribe plant-derived HRTs. For information, literature, discussion boards, and ways to help, visit: [www.premarin.org](http://www.premarin.org)  
[www.pmurescue.org/about\\_pmu.php](http://www.pmurescue.org/about_pmu.php) • [www.unitedpegasus.com](http://www.unitedpegasus.com)
3. Boycott goods from Wyeth-Ayerst/American Home Products. For a products list, see [www.wyeth.com/products](http://www.wyeth.com/products). Let Wyeth know why you won’t use their products: Robert Essner, President and CEO, Wyeth-Ayerst  
5 Giralda Farms • Madison, NJ 07940 • ph: 800-999-9384

*PHOTO: Horses at the Ciudad Juarez plant are stabbed in the back until the spinal cord is severed, then hoisted so their throats can be slit. JERRY LARA: SAN ANTONIO EXPRESS-NEWS, 2008*



## PEE FACTORIES & DEATH

**ASSEMBLY-LINE PRODUCTION:** Premarin industry mares are impregnated and restrained in stalls 3.5 ft. wide by 8 ft. deep — leaving a 2300-pound pregnant draft mare barely enough room to stand, let alone move or extend her legs for circulation. **No laws mandate how horses are treated — only a code of practice** created by Wyeth under its NAERIC (North American Equine Ranching Industry Council). Wyeth self-polices PMU farms for compliance with its code.

**PEE MACHINES:** A mare’s head is bound to keep her from lying down. A urine collection cup is roped around her other end. Collection cups may cause urine-coated sores and trap feces. Mares are denied ample drinking water to consolidate hormones in their urine. “[Wyeth] claims the water restriction policy has been modified; however they remain unwilling to give humane organizations access to farms to verify such changes,” *Humane Society of the U.S., 2007*.

**RE-IMPREGNATED, THEN DEATH:** Foals are born, mares are re-impregnated and confined in stalls. Foals are slaughtered for meat. Spent PMU mares also wind up at auction after about four years.

**IN 2009 ABOUT 5,600 MARES PEE FOR WYETH:** They’re kept on 73 contract farms (mainly in Manitoba, Canada) that are forbidden by Wyeth to work with rescue groups. *Danielle Titland, 1/6/09. Pregnant Mare’s Urine Disguised as Osteoporosis Drugs? Int’l Fund for Horses*. Almost 1 in 4 foals die of starvation or exposure, a Canadian Veterinary Journal study reveals. *Menopause, Horses, and the Industry of Death, Gregory McNamee, 11/8/07*.

**2007, WYETH MAKES A NEW HORSE-PEE DRUG:** Amid plummeting sales for PMU-formulated drugs, FDA approves APRELA, a new horse-pee drug intended to remedy osteoporosis along with menopause. Aprela will increase demand for horse pee by 4.5 times. *Titland, 1/6/09*.

**2007 STATE COURTS CLOSE AMERICA’S LAST THREE EQUINE PROCESSORS IN TEXAS AND ILLINOIS:** But the lack of a federal law lets over 100,000 horses go to slaughter in Canada and Mexico in 2008. Animal protection advocates lobby Congress to pass the American Horse Slaughter Prevention Act to outlaw horse export to other nations for slaughter.

**FOREIGN KILL FLOORS AWAIT “USED-UP” HORSES:** To reach kill plants, horses travel 700 or more miles in double-decked cattle trailers that hurt their heads and necks. Food, water and rest are withheld for 24 or more hours. Horses arrive weak and injured. Some are dead by journey’s end. Others are kept in over-packed trailers for days at the plant, enduring hot or cold weather extremes. Horses who collapse are brutally offloaded.

Slaughter is excruciating for these easily excitable animals. Horses are goaded into the kill box with fiberglass rods. Workers pummel their faces, necks, backs and legs. The captive bolt pistols used in Canada often don’t work on such long-necked animals, and leave them thrashing in pain. In Mexico, killers use a “puntilla knife” to sever a horse’s spinal cord. Investigative reports from San Antonio News-Express and the Houston Chronicle (2007) show alert horses stabbed repeatedly around the withers. When a horse finally falls, he is merely paralyzed as workers dangle him by his hind leg and slit his throat. Some horses even remain sentient when dismembered. *Houston Chronicle. U.S. Ban On Horse Slaughter Means A More Gruesome Death Elsewhere*.

**2002 MEDICAL STUDY JOLTS PMU INDUSTRY:** A Women’s Health Initiative study for National Institutes of Health links long-term Premarin use to heightened risk for stroke and blood clots. Prempro use is tied to heart disease and breast cancer. NIH directs physicians to stop prescribing PMU drugs. Within two years of the study about 350 PMU farms lose contracts, Wyeth faces multiple lawsuits, and sales drop by 60%. Thousands of horses on some 700 farms mostly go to slaughter; some are spared by individuals or rescue groups.

**1987 INVESTIGATIVE PHOTOS/VIDEO EXPOSE PMU ABUSE FOR FIRST TIME:** 1988 Fall/ Winter issue of Equine Times News, or ET-News publishes atrocities: Dead and mutilated horses, farmers brutalizing horses for no apparent reason, horses missing limbs, hooves separated from limbs...