

SILVER DAPPLE OCULAR CHANGES IN HOMOZYGOTES <AKA> Z/Z FOR SILVER ALLELE

This is taken from Dr. Phillip Sponnenberg's 2nd edition of his book 'Equine Color Genetics' 2nd edition'-published in 2003 from the Iowa State Press

“Re. silver dapple ocular effects. Ocular changes are consistently associated with colors of this grouping many breeds in which this allele occur, so it is safe to assume that the ocular changes are indeed part of this allele. Detailed studies have yet to be done, BUT the anecdotal evidence suggests that then heterozygotes are minimally affected and vision is normal or nearly so. Homozygotes have profoundly affected eyes, and some are affected to the point where vision is NOT normal. A simple breeding strategy to avoid producing visually deficient horses of these colors is to mate SILVER to NONSILVERS. This can be tricky in some breeds in which this allele is common, because CHESTNUT and SORREL horses will not express the allele, but can carry it. They could pass it on to foal and could therefore be responsible for producing homozygotes. In breeds in which this allele is common, it is safest to mate chestnut, sorrel or colors derived from these to bay, brown or black mates free of the silver dapple allele. This strategy assures that the production of homozygotes is avoided.”

Since this article was published, we now can have genetic tests done on our horses for the silver. Allele. This article is written by one of the foremost Equine Geneticist in the world. I am sending it out to beg breeders of the silver dapple horses to please NOT breed silver to silver. I also, am going to try to educate the associations to not register Z/Z or homozygous silver horses as this could begin another treacherous hurdle which would create another genetic red flag in our wonderful breed.

Celeste Huston owner and breeder of St Clarins and Cici's Sir Keith, 2 silver dapple stallions who cares to create education about this issue!