

Homeopathy for Dogs
ALTERNATIVE VETERINARY MEDICINE CENTRE

Article WS117/07

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HOMEOPATHY FOR DOGS

CANINE HOMEOPATHY

The great many people turning to alternative medicine for their children, for themselves and yes, for their pets too, cannot all be wrong. More and more veterinary surgeons are joining the ranks of those using [homeopathy](http://www.alternativevet.org) and other alternatives and they are all reporting greater interest and more insistent demands from their clientèle. What is the reason for all this?

Homeopathy, which was first discovered and founded in the late eighteenth century, has had devotees and powerful proponents ever since. It has steadily proved its worth in the cure of chronic and distressing diseases in humans. Early use in animals was never prevalent and popularity waited until the last few decades. Dog people have realised, in large numbers, that homeopathy can offer a very good chance of cure, or at least extremely good amelioration, of a large number of very troublesome and chronic diseases. A look at my monthly case load gives a good impression of those diseases causing the most concern and which respond least well to conventional medication. Epilepsy (and other fits), skin troubles, arthritis, the wide spectrum of so-called behavioural problems, poor-healing injuries, paralysis, cancer, eye disease, heart problems, asthmatic-type conditions, chronic coughs, sinusitis, traumatic foreign body (e.g. grass seeds), ear problems, digestive disturbances, colitis and IBS, kidney problems, back injuries etc. all respond with a greater or lesser success rate, usually well above the conventionally acceptable prognosis levels. We use combinations of different therapies, e.g. [Homeopathy](http://www.alternativevet.org), [Acupuncture](http://www.alternativevet.org), [Herbs](http://www.alternativevet.org), [Bach Flowers](http://www.alternativevet.org), [Aromatherapy](http://www.alternativevet.org), [Chiropractic](http://www.alternativevet.org), or we may use any of these therapies singly, in order to obtain a response in the patient. In all cases what we are trying to achieve is a stimulus to the body's own (and very powerful) healing processes.

This unlocking of the healing ability of the patient, along with stimulation, encouragement and guidance of that capability, can result in the most

spectacular recoveries in conditions hitherto believed to be ‘for life’. The body has a little-understood wealth of self-curing ability and any results that are achieved by these methods are, of course, very real, since they have come about as a result of healing from within, not as a result of suppression of symptoms.

Homeopathy is the medical system upon which I shall concentrate, in outlining the processes involved in natural medicine and the possibilities opened up by tapping the under-used healing resource inherent in the body of all humans and animals.

Founded by Samuel Hahnemann, after his discoveries in 1790, homeopathy exploits the natural ‘law of similars’. To understand this immutable and eternal law of nature, all we really need to know is that a substance which is capable of provoking symptoms in a healthy body is able to stimulate cure of similar symptoms when found in disease. Guided by confidence in this principle, which may at first seem strange to us, we can prescribe, for instance, the homeopathic remedy *Arsenicum* for a ‘diarrhoea and vomiting’ attack. These symptoms of gastroenteritis, similar to the syndrome of food poisoning in humans, is a very good match to the acute symptoms of exposure to material but sub-lethal quantities of the element Arsenic. There are some two to three thousand such homeopathic medicines, developed over the last two centuries, all of which can be used according to the same principle; what they can cause, they can cure. Not all are as toxic in material doses as Arsenic. There are remedies prepared from plants (e.g. *Pulsatilla*), minerals (e.g. *Sulphur*) and animal material (e.g. *Lachesis*).

Hahnemann’s original discovery was with Cinchona Bark, the material which yields the drug Quinine. He found, to his surprise, that repeated small doses of this substance, given to healthy humans (himself and others), was able to produce symptoms indistinguishable from the disease Malaria, a disease for which Quinine is famous as being able to provide a cure!

How does this principle work in real life? How would we try to treat a dog which has suffered a distressing skin problem for a number of years, despite the use of drugs in an attempt to alleviate symptoms? What we need to do is to try to assess the collection of symptoms shown (e.g. itch, heat, redness, sores or other lesions, pigmentation etc.) along with a study of the personality and demeanour of the dog, his behaviour, his likes and dislikes, his reaction to different conditions of weather, season, time of day, meal times etc., the reaction of the symptoms themselves to such stimuli, the build and appearance of the dog, his diet, his vaccination history, his past medical history and all factors which may obviously or less clearly impinge upon his life and upon his condition. Diet is extremely important and we always recommend a natural, wholesome, varied diet for our patients, in order to optimise the healing process.

Vaccination can be a serious intentional unbalancing influence on immune and homeostatic processes and is potentially, therefore, a very important consideration in the study of disease aetiology and development.

Having collected all the information we can, in this way (and this is never a speedy process; homeopathic consultations do take a considerable time), we try to select a homeopathic remedy which most closely ‘covers’ all these points in this individual, using the information on all the remedies accumulated in two hundred years of development. In this way, an itchy dog may receive *Pulsatilla* if mild, yielding, loving fresh air, displaying little thirst, symptoms worsening in a stuffy room in the evening, with a tendency to produce greenish-yellow bland mucopurulent discharges. The next skin case may require *Sulphur*, if he displays a dislike of heat, symptoms made worse by heat, significant thirst, a smelly, dirty-looking skin, severe itchiness and heat and redness within the skin. Another dog who may be overweight, lazy, smelly, liking heat but aggravated by heat, with an unhealthy skin which heals poorly, may require *Graphites*. These short ‘pictures’ used as examples could be expanded both in detail and in number, since there is so much information on the remedy pictures and there are so many homeopathic medicines which can be applicable in skin cases. Space does not allow. Arthritis, Epilepsy, Bowel disorders and all other chronic conditions require a similar holistic approach and can offer great rewards.

Acute disease such as gastroenteritis, injuries of all types, abscess formation etc. can all respond very well to prompt and appropriate home prescriptions, with remedies often easily obtainable in low potency from pharmacies and health shops. *Arnica* is of immense value in all cases of injury, but particularly where there is bruising and trauma. *Hypericum* is very valuable for nerve injuries and injuries to sensitive extremities, such as tail or toes. *Ledum* is an essential prompt treatment for puncture wounds. *Belladonna* is extremely impressive where there is sudden or high fever, particularly if symptoms centre around the head. *Aconitum* is similarly valuable and essential in cases of sudden shocks, traumas and fevers, especially if symptoms centre on the chest. *Arsenicum* is of inestimable value in gastroenteritis, especially if there is a dry mouth with thirst. *Mercurius solubilis* should be used in similar circumstances if there is profuse salivation, with a great thirst. In both these cases of simple gastroenteritis, if the correct medicine has been chosen, the symptoms will cease more or less immediately.

Veterinary homeopathy is also of value in the prevention of disease ([homeoprophylaxis](#)) and a great many people, including the author, believe that it is adequately effective to be a worthy substitute for conventional vaccination. Unfortunately, scientific proof of the use of homeopathy in such a way is not available, since it would involve animal experimentation in which the author will not participate for any purpose. For this reason, no claims of efficacy can

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be made. Tablets or powders can be obtained for the prevention of all those major diseases for which there is a conventional vaccine available. Results of a clinical trial performed by the author, in the prevention of [Kennel Cough](#) with most impressive results, was published in 1986. In this trial the [nosode](#) (that is the name given to these preventive remedies) appeared to have been more effective than conventional vaccines and served to stop in its tracks an outbreak of Kennel Cough in a boarding kennel in the summer of 1985.

It is important to bear in mind, when considering the use of vet homeopathy, that UK law provides for home treatments by an animal's owner and otherwise, only by a qualified veterinary surgeon. No non-veterinary third party is legally allowed to diagnose or to prescribe for animals. If you wish to consult a veterinary surgeon who uses homeopathy (homeopathic vet), a list is obtainable from the Hon. Sec. of the British Association of Homeopathic Veterinary Surgeons, Alternative Veterinary Medicine Centre, Chinham House, Stanford in the Vale, Oxon, SN7 8NQ, UK. Please enclose a self-addressed, stamped envelope for the reply. This list details those veterinary surgeons who have taken the examinations in homeopathy and those who have attended courses and not yet sat examinations. It also lists those not in either category but who use some homeopathy in their work. In all cases, if your own veterinary surgeon does not use homeopathy, you will need a letter of referral with full history, to visit another veterinary surgeon.

Christopher Day (homeopathic vet – vet homeopath) – September 1998

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