

## Dog Acupuncture

### **Could the alternative treatment of dog acupuncture help your dog?**

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Practiced in China for thousands of years, acupuncture is the stimulation of certain points, or what practitioners call meridians, in the body. According to Chinese medical theory, energy flows through the meridians, and acupuncture corrects excesses or deficiencies in the body's energy flow. Needles are most commonly associated with acupuncture, but related techniques include applying pressure with the fingers (acupressure), burning an herb near the appropriate meridian (moxibustion), and injecting various solutions into the point (aquapuncture). The area may also be stimulated with ultrasound or lasers.

Conditions that are most responsive to acupuncture include musculoskeletal problems such as arthritis and hip dysplasia; partial tears of the cruciate ligament; postsurgical recovery; skin diseases and allergic dermatitis; and chronic diarrhea or vomiting. Veterinarians who use acupuncture find that it works best for pain relief. Sometimes acupuncture shows immediate results, but it's not always a quick fix and its benefits can be subtle. You must commit to regular treatments to see results. Acupuncture is often used in conjunction with nutraceuticals, a food or food ingredient that is believed to have health benefits.

Acupuncture isn't appropriate for every ailment. Practitioners advise against using it to treat cancer. Performing acupuncture near or into a tumor, or along a meridian line that goes through the tumor can increase its size. Acupuncture is not recommended in conjunction with homeopathy, a system of medical practice that treats a disease with tiny doses of a remedy that in a healthy animal would produce signs of the disease being treated. The two forms of medicine can interfere with each other.

Next step: Chiropractic Care

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