

Healing Dogs Through Homeopathy

Learn how the simple concept behind this 200-year-old practice can help your dog.

Denise Flaim

Only a trained homeopath should attempt to treat chronic and complex conditions such as arthritis or heart disease. But with some research, you can treat temporary injuries, such as a sprained pastern.

"This is where homeopathy really shines," Blake says. "If a dog gets a bee sting and you give him Apis mel or Ledum, you'll likely see dramatic results. You don't need 20 years experience to figure that out. And if you choose the wrong remedy, you really can't do any harm."

Finding an expert

There are two main resources for finding a homeopathic vet: the Academy of Veterinary Homeopathy and the American Holistic Veterinary Medical Association. The first certifies homeopathic vets, most of whom practice classical homeopathy, which means they do not use other holistic healing systems such as traditional Chinese medicine or herbs.

In contrast, many of the AHVMA's holistic vets take a more buffet style approach, using a variety of techniques, homeopathy among them.

Sagrera suggests you learn more about homeopathy to decide which approach is right for your dog. And because some homeopathic vets do not concentrate on traditional techniques such as surgery, she recommends retaining a conventional vet as well to deal with emergencies.

Some homeopathic vets will do phone consultations; others, like Anne Gard, DVM, of Oxford Junction, Iowa, prefer to see patients in person. "At least until I know them well," says Gard, who has been practicing homeopathy for two years. "Sometimes when owners give the information over the phone, what they see is not what you would see."

Because homeopathic vets stress the importance of keeping the body free of stress and toxins, most advocate a natural diet (often raw, depending on the animals age and health status), as well as minimal vaccinations, if any.

With the increasing popularity of holistic healing, more conventionally trained veterinarians like Gard use homeopathy, and more owners like Young turn to it to treat everything from cancer to hip dysplasia. But Blake hopes that more dog owners will begin to seek out homeopathy before their dog becomes desperately ill as a way to preserve health, not restore it.

"My dream is that someday," he says, "it won't be the eleventh-hour medicine."