

## Natural Dog Success Story: Kidney Failure – and Restoration

### **Powerful essential oils help heal ailing hunting dog.**

*Denise Flaim*

The dog: Katie, a 7-year-old German Shorthaired Pointer.

The problem: One day in February 2003, Katie returned tired and sore from a day of hunting. Owner Sharon Erwin noticed her discomfort and gave her ibuprofen, not knowing such pain relievers are toxic — and sometimes fatal — to dogs.

The next day, alarmed at Katie's dark brown urine, Erwin rushed her to James Miles, DVM, at St. Charles Animal Hospital. The diagnosis: myoglobinuria, in which the cell walls of the overexerted muscles rupture, releasing toxic proteins. The ibuprofen had put more stress on Katie's kidneys, and she was now in acute renal failure.

The conventional approach: "We did intensive intravenous fluid therapy, hoping to flush as much of the myoglobin out of the kidneys as possible," Miles says, adding that he also gave Katie antibiotics, anti-vomiting medication, and antacids to stabilize her calcium and phosphorus levels. But nothing seemed to work, and Katie's bloodwork gave every indication that her organs were slowly shutting down.

The holistic approach: With Miles' permission, Erwin called in Sue Olmos of Midstates Myotherapy.

Olmos first detoxified Katie using essential oils — steam-distilled extracts from plants and trees. She applied them over Katie's kidneys, liver, abdomen, and heart "with my hands acting as a heating compress to drive them into the skin," she explains. "Others were dripped alongside the spine and gently feathered into the muscles."

Olmos selected the oils for their antimicrobial, antispasmodic, and analgesic properties. Among them, juniper, which increases kidney circulation and helps clear toxins, and peppermint, which stimulates appetite and reduces inflammation in both intestinal and urinary tracts.

A day after Katie's first essential-oil treatment, her blood values plateaued, Miles says, and steadily improved as Olmos continued daily treatments.

After several days, Olmos turned to myotherapy, derived from the Greek word for muscle, to clear the lactic-acid buildup that had broken down Katie's muscles. Something of a cross between acupressure and physical therapy, "myotherapy uses compression and deep pressure to release muscle knots," Olmos says.

The result: Despite Miles' expectation that Katie would have to be euthanized, she left the clinic after a little more than two weeks. "I definitely would say that her survival is a miracle," he says.

Caveats: Oils can be very powerful and should only be administered by an experienced practitioner.

Finding a practitioner who is trained in essential oils or myotherapy can be challenging. Start with the American Holistic Veterinary Medical Association ([www.avma.org](http://www.avma.org)). Note that state laws vary. Some require a veterinary referral; others prohibit non-vets from treating animals, regardless of their level of training.

Denise Flaim is a DOG FANCY contributing editor.