

Elburn Animal Hospital Newsletter

July, 2009

Welcome

July is Alternative Medicine Month. Many of our clients already know that Dr. Cechner is certified in the holistic modalities of acupuncture and chiropractic, and also practices Chinese herbology. But not everyone knows just what these practices are or what they are used to treat. This month we are focusing on alternative medicine and how each type can help our pets. Any questions can be addressed to a member of our staff at (630) 365-9599, or you can contact us via email at 3lburn@sbcglobal.net.

Safety First

The 4th of July is exciting and fun for people, but can be scary and even dangerous for pets. The following tips can help keep your pet safe during this exciting holiday.

- Leave pets at home. No matter how tempted you are to include family pets in celebrations, don't. Even very calm, placid animals can become incredibly frightened when confronted with noise, crowds and unfamiliar territory. Pets may unexpectedly bite or run off.
- Don't ever leave your pet in a parked car. They may become extremely fearful, even destructive, during fireworks displays, or even in crowded parking areas, and exhibit unusual behavior, including biting. Even if your pet does not do this, there is not enough air flow inside a parked car to prevent heat stress in pets, even with the windows open.
- Keep your pet confined inside the house, in a kennel if need be. Many pets are frightened of loud noises, and being confined in a "safe zone" can reduce the tension they feel. Confining your pet in this manner also helps keep him from injuring himself during panicky moments. This is especially helpful if you are not available to calm your pet during the fireworks.
- If your pet becomes extremely agitated during thunderstorms or other loud times, you may consider additional means to calm him. Here we have two products that can help. One is herbal and does not give a sedative effect, but helps the



pet manage his fearfulness better. The other is a sedative and is used for more severe cases. These options are usually considered for pets who cannot be safely crated.



- Never leave alcoholic beverages within your pet's reach. Small amounts of alcohol are enough to severely affect companion animals, and may cause coma or death in sufficient quantities.
- Keep poisonous "party" items away from pets. These include citronella products, other insect repellants, matches, lighter fluid, and glow jewelry. Some of these products can cause serious injury, especially if ingested. If you suspect your pet has ingested or come in contact with any of these chemicals, please call ASPCA Poison Control at (888) 426-4435 (there is a fee involved).

July: Alternative Medicine

The Institute of Medicine defines alternative medicine as, "...a broad domain of resources...other than those intrinsic to the dominant health system of a particular society or culture in a given historical period." Basically anything other than Western, practitioner-based medicine falls under this category in the United States. But certain types of alternative, or complementary, medicine are more widely accepted than others. Doctor Cechner is certified in chiropractic and acupuncture. We also employ Chinese herbal medicine, homeopathic remedies and nutritional medicine. But where did these modalities come from, how do they work, and what are they used to treat?

- Acupuncture: Acupuncture is a modality associated closely with Traditional Chinese medicine (TCM). To date, no one has described the anatomical basis for acupuncture points, but the Chinese theory is that energy, or *qi*, flows along meridians located in the body. When one or more of these meridians is partially or wholly



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blocked, disease states result. Very thin needles are inserted into specific points along these meridians, which unblock the flow of *qi*. This practice has been used for centuries—perhaps as far back as 3,000BC, but at least to the 3rd century BC. The origin of acupuncture is also uncertain, but it is most often attributed to ancient Chinese medicine. One legend states that Chinese soldiers, hit with arrows, experienced pain relief in other parts of their bodies, and thus began experimenting with arrows and later needles to relieve pain. The Chinese developed the practice to such a point that acupuncture may be used instead of traditional anesthesia even in highly invasive surgical procedures. Acupuncture is

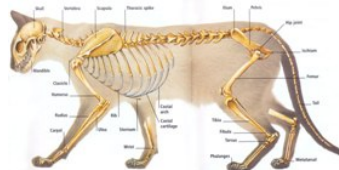


often used to manage pain, but has many other applications as well. Here, we use acupuncture treatments to help alleviate allergies, to reduce pain, to increase mobility, and as an adjunct to chemotherapy or radiation treatments for cancer, as well as other treatments. Acupuncture has behavioral applications as well. It can be used with other modalities, and is commonly prescribed alongside traditional Western medicine and chiropractic treatments. It can be performed in a variety of ways. The traditional method is with “dry” needles, but “aquapuncture,” which uses injections of a vitamin supplement, and electroacupuncture, which utilizes electrical stimulation of acupuncture points, are two other methods. The World Health Organization released a report in 2003 analyzing the effectiveness of acupuncture treatments for different conditions; the report may be accessed online at WHO’s website, <http://apps.who.int/medicinedocs/en/d/Js4926e>. Dr. Cechner completed her training through Tufts University, and is certified by and a member of the International Veterinary Acupuncture Society. Their website can be found at www.ivas.org.

- Chiropractic: This modality focuses on joint and soft tissue manipulation, mostly in the spine. It was begun in the 1890s by



D.D. Palmer and furthered by his son, B.J. Palmer. There are two theories associated with chiropractic medicine. The first, original theory postulates that subluxations in the spine upset the body’s innate intelligence, causing disease. The second, more widely held view is that the body’s health is intricately bound to the vertebral column and the nerves that extend from it. Subluxations are not necessarily the only cause of disease, but spinal misalignment contributes to



many different disease states, especially those involving mobility, but also disorders of the digestive tract, skin integrity, urinary system, and others. Adjustments to the spine correct these misalignments and allow nerve impulses to improve and register correctly within the central nervous system. Chiropractic medicine is often used in conjunction with other types of medicine, including mainstream diagnostics (such as X-rays), acupuncture, lifestyle adjustments, herbal and nutritional therapies. Dr. Cechner is certified by and a member of the American Veterinary Chiropractic Association, the regulating agency in veterinary medicine, whose website is <http://animalchiropractic.org>.

- Herbal Medicine: Herbal medicine is the art of combining medicinal herbs; it is the fundamental modality of TCM. Once a condition has been diagnosed according to the principles of Chinese herbalism, a formula is tailored not only to the condition being treated but also to the



individual’s entire health status. A skilled herbologist must decoct the herbs to their purest form, then combine proper amounts of each type necessary to treat a patient. The balance and interaction of all the ingredients relative to the patient is considered more important than the prescription of individual ingredients. Herbal medicine as it is used now has existed for centuries in China, but many cultures have developed their own type of herbology based on the plants available in the area. Dr. Cechner includes the use of both Western herbs and traditional Chinese herbs in

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her practice. Herbal mixtures can be used in conjunction with acupuncture and chiropractic treatments, or used alone. Chinese herbal medicine alone is used about 90% of the time in China, for all kinds of ailments. Dr. Cechner completed her training with Dr. Mona Boudreaux. The Tufts university website has good information on TCM, found at <http://www.tufts.edu/med/ebcam/eastAsianMed/ChineseHM.html>.

- **Nutritional Therapy:** This modality is a foundation of TCM methodology and is often combined with other therapies. It is based upon using foods from the "five flavors" of TCM, which bring the body's systems into balance. It includes dietary and lifestyle changes, nutritional supplementation, and the addition of therapeutic foods to treat many disease states.
- **Homeopathy:** Homeopathic medicine is based on the idea that "like cures like." The medications are extremely diluted preparations made from substances that cause the symptoms being treated. Practitioners assess a patient's symptoms, as well as their overall physical and psychological state, then choose remedies appropriate for the being as a whole. There are many different homeopathic preparations available to treat a wide variety of symptoms and it is often used in combination with nutritional therapy and other modalities.

Alternative medicine techniques are varied and not all are well understood. The treatments seem to work, but the mechanism of action is often not well known scientifically speaking. Even so, the large body of evidence supporting the effectiveness of different modalities should not be ignored. Controlled studies exist showing great promise for alternative medicine, even if many of the mechanisms are not fully understood. Because of these studies, acupuncture and chiropractic medicine are being accepted into the Western medical field. Hopefully the above descriptions helped enlighten some of the possibilities of using alternative medicine for our companion animal friends. If you have any questions, let us know!

In our August newsletter we will discuss immunizations. It is Immunization Awareness

Month, and although most pet owners elect to provide this protection to their companion animal friends, many do not know what we are protecting against, or why. If you have any questions or concerns, or would like more information, visit our website at www.elburnanimalhospital.com, or give us a call at (630) 365-9599. If you would like to opt out of receiving our newsletter, please send an email to us at 3lburn@sbcglobal.net.

July Special: Does your dog itch all the time? Or seem stiff when he gets up in the morning? Has it been awhile since your cat jumped up on the counter? Now that you know a little bit about alternative medicine treatments, schedule an appointment during the month of July for first-time holistic medicine consult and receive \$25 off the consult fee. Make sure you mention this ad to get the discount! 😊

Upcoming Events: Keep thinking about your pet's costume for our **October Open House!** We are hosting another open house at our office, on Saturday, October 24th. Last year we had prizes for best costume, best family theme costumes, and a look-alike contest.

We are currently trying to schedule an adoption event, possibly in conjunction with our open house. If any one has suggestions, works with a shelter group that would be interested in participating, or would like to volunteer, please contact Darlene, our office manager.

Do you have an idea for a newsletter? A question you'd like answered about caring for your pet? Email us and let us know! We are always interested in what you have to say, and what you want to know.