



Companion Chatter

MARCH 2015

The “Paws”-itive Effects of Animal Acupuncture

Acupuncture: What is it?

Acupuncture in people is one of the oldest medical procedures in recorded history, while animal acupuncture is slightly less ancient. The original theories of traditional Chinese medicine formed the basis of acupuncture - needling certain spots on the body regulated the flow of “Chi” (energy), which flowed through and nourished the tissues and organs.

How does acupuncture work?

In traditional Oriental medicine, “Chi” runs through channels (called meridians), which can be thought of as rivers of energy. These rivers can become blocked like a dam, and needling releases the obstruction. In modern scientific terms, needling specific points leads to the release of chemicals in the muscles, spinal cord, and brain. These chemical mediators can change the perception of pain and lead to release of other chemical mediators that influence organ function. This improved “chemical communication” stimulates healing. There are many approaches to treatment, but veterinarians are the only acupuncture professionals trained to understand both the traditional Oriental as well as the scientific aspects of acupuncture therapy in animals.

What will happen during acupuncture treatments?

Acupuncture treatments are usually well tolerated by animals. Most veterinarians will want your animal as relaxed as possible, and therapy may lead to further relaxation. Acupuncture needles are very thin, solid, sterile needles. Needle insertion is usually not painful, however, certain points can be sensitive. Multiple acupuncture needles will be placed depending on the point prescription. Some animals will become very quiet and even fall asleep during a treatment. Treatment time will vary depending on the animal, the acupuncture technique and the condition being treated. Acupuncture effects are cumulative so several treatments are usually necessary for chronic medical conditions, then tapered down as

needed for maintenance. For certain conditions, electroacupuncture may be used. Electroacupuncture is especially important for treating back pain and neurologic diseases. Aquapuncture can also be used. In this therapy, Vitamin B 12 or another liquid is injected into acupuncture points for longer lasting effects.



Milo receives electroacupuncture following his back surgery. With the help of acupuncture, Milo had a full recovery.

What can acupuncture treat?

In people and animals, there is good evidence that acupuncture is effective for the treatment of musculoskeletal, gastrointestinal, respiratory, urinary, skin, reproductive, neurologic, behavioral disorders, as well as for stress. In cancer patients, acupuncture can be extremely effective for the alleviation of pain, fatigue, treatment of gastrointestinal disorders such as nausea, vomiting, inappetence, and improving the quality of life.

Are there any side effects?

Acupuncture can result in a relaxed state, which can be misinterpreted as lethargy or a worsening condition. This is temporary and indicates that the animal is indeed sensitive to the effects of acupuncture. Your veterinarian will adjust the treatment, if needed, at your next visit. Acupuncture needles are sterilized, so infection from the needle site is extremely rare. Any concerns that you have about the treatment should be discussed with your veterinarian.

At Companion Animal Clinic, we use acupuncture with dry needles, electroacupuncture, and aquapuncture. Depending on the condition being treated, specific massage techniques, foods, and herbal medications may be recommended.

Client Success Stories

Cally, a 5-year old Scottish Terrier who has been suffering from idiopathic epilepsy (which causes seizures) for years finally found relief through acupuncture and herbal medication. Her owner says “Cally’s seizures have decreased in severity and frequency and she is a happy-go-lucky Scottie who is enjoying life”. Cally had been on increasing doses of medication to help control her seizures and after a specialist recommended adding a third medication her owner decided to look into other options. “We are extremely pleased with the response to the acupuncture and herbal supplement and plan to continue the treatments!”

Sofie, an 18-year old domestic short haired cat had been suffering from chronic kidney disease as well as limited back and leg mobility. Sofie’s owner says “she walked stiffly, hesitated to climb steps and struggled to make even the smallest jumps”. Sofie began acupuncture with Dr. Herring in July 2014 and her owner has noticed “a pronounced improvement in her mobility and energy level at home.” She states that Sofie once again she “runs, jumps, ascends and descends the stairs with ease and speed, and chases her toys around the house!” Along with Sofie’s new-found energy, her kidney disease seems to have stabilized since beginning acupuncture treatments. “I could not be more pleased and grateful for the tremendous improvement Dr. Herring’s acupuncture has made in Sophie. I believe that it has added (and will continue to add) high quality years to Sofie’s life.”

OUR HOURS:

| | |
|-------|---------------|
| MON | 7:30am-7:30pm |
| TUES | 7:30am-6pm |
| WED | 7:30am-7:30pm |
| THURS | 7:30am-6pm |
| FRI | 7:30am-6pm |
| SAT | 8am-1pm |
| SUN | 5pm-5:30pm** |

**boarding pick ups and drop offs only

St. Patty's Day Patties Recipe



- 1-1/2 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 cup whole wheat flour
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- 4 strips bacon, cut into small pieces
- 4 cups green peas, drained (about two cans)
- 2 tablespoons water



Preheat oven to 325 degrees. Mix dry ingredients. Fry bacon and reserve drippings; cool. Put peas in blender or food processor and blend. Mix blended peas and bacon with drippings; add dry ingredients and mix well. Knead dough and pat out or roll to under 1/2 inch thickness. Cut with cookie cutters to desired shape and place on lightly oiled cookie sheet. Bake at 325 degrees for 25 minutes or until browned. Cool and serve.

Have You Heard the News?

We now offer the PUREVAX Rabies 3 year vaccine for your feline friends! Now, all of our feline vaccines are PUREVAX, ensuring the best quality care for your cats and kittens.

What is a PUREVAX vaccine? PUREVAX is a Merial line of feline-specific vaccines that uses state-of-the-art technology to deliver everything needed to induce immunity in your cat without any of the unnecessary proteins or adjuvants. **What is the benefit of using PUREVAX?** Adjuvants, commonly found in other feline vaccines, are additives that increase the immune response and may present potential risks to feline patients, including reactions and chronic inflammation. PUREVAX is the *only* complete line of nonadjuvanted feline vaccines available.



"Until one has loved an animal, a part of one's soul remains unawakened."

-Anatole France

Employee Spotlight



Ashley R.
veterinary assistant

Ashley graduated in May of 2014 from N.C. State University with B.S. degrees in Animal Science and Nutrition Science. Prior to graduating, Ashley performed or participated in research in the fields of snake physiology, invertebrate anesthesia, canine nutrition, and urban wildlife conservation. She worked as a dog trainer for one year and a veterinary assistant for two years prior to joining the Companion team. Ashley and her husband are allowed to live in their home, which is owned by two cats, Ashes and Gutsy, one dog, a collie named Tucker, and two snakes, a corn snake named Mickey and a Green Tree Python named Kaji. Ashley loves all animals, but especially loves working with reptiles and amphibians. In her spare time, Ashley enjoys sheep herding with her collie, crocheting with her husband, and hiking.

EMERGENCIES

If your pet has an emergency after hours, a vet is on call here until 10pm to answer your questions and help you decide if you need emergency care. If your pet needs to see a doctor you can go to the Vet School at VA Tech (540-231-4621, Town and Country (540-382-5042 or Emergency Veterinary Services of Roanoke (540-563-8575).

