

Homeopathy for animals - A wiggly bundle of joy Life-Changing for animals and humans - October 2003

by Jeff Feinman, VMD, CVH



As a conventionally trained veterinarian with a background in biomedical and clinical research, I believed that I had already learned enough to help most of my patients. The majority of them recovered from their acute diseases. Even after thirteen years of practice though, the same animals kept returning with the same chronic conditions. Orthodox treatments, herbal medicine, and nutritional supplements would only help temporarily. Either my patients were getting sicker or I was losing my healing touch.

Everything changed when I "discovered" homeopathy six years ago. As a scientist, homeopathy's tenets of "like cures like" and the "infinitesimal dose" were initially too far out for me. Although I had practiced holistically for over a decade, I had never taken the time to try to understand homeopathy.

When I read historical accounts of homeopathic doctors' success in treating epidemics even before the use of antibiotics, however, my curiosity was piqued. My initially tentative literature research led quickly to serious study. I then began using homeopathic remedies on myself, my pets, and my wife (all cooperative guinea pigs!). Homeopathy has changed our lives.

A healing coincidence

While taking Bryonia for a shoulder injury in the Spring of 1998, I noticed a funny coincidence. Aside from my shoulder healing nicely (which I cynically figured would have happened anyway), my lifelong seasonal allergies never appeared. I decided it probably just happened to be a low allergen year and that once the heat and humidity of summer hit, I would be back on my daily regimen of antihistamines and inhalers. The allergies never did return.

When I realized that my allergies had resolved at the same time that I'd been taking the homeopathic remedy, I eventually put two and two together. I knew my patients could benefit just the way I had, so that fall I enrolled in Dr. Richard Pitcairn's Professional Course for Veterinary Homeopathy.

A gateway to health

That year, instead of feeling frustrated and helpless when a chronically ill pet walked in my door, I began to feel hopeful that their illness, with homeopathic treatment, could be a gateway to better health. Best of all, I now had a strong scientific framework for understanding why my patients got sick and how to help them get well.

The goal of veterinary medicine is to keep our patients free of disease. In conventional medicine, this means eliminating their outward signs. For example, itching pets are treated with antihistamines and cortisone to stop the itch; red, smelly ear "infections" are treated with topical antibiotic/steroid/antifungal ointments, etc.

Suppression of disease

In homeopathy, we understand that these signs/deviations from the norm are actually our clue that there is an internal imbalance that needs to be corrected. By eliminating the outward sign of the internal disease, the body is stopped from trying to tell us that something is wrong. This suppression of signs of disease is an extremely important contributor to the development of later problems.

Unfortunately, many patients first enter my office after having been suppressed by conventional treatments all their lives. Manifestations of imbalance like eye and ear "infections," hot spots, benign skin growths, etc., are all treated as if their elimination will rid the body of the underlying disease. These treatments cause weakening of the body and the inability to produce any more acute signs of imbalance. Inevitably, what results are a myriad of chronic diseases: like liver, kidney, and autoimmune diseases, or cancer. There is no effective and safe conventional treatment for many of these. Fortunately homeopathy can often help.

Only some of these animals can actually be cured. Most, however, will have a longer and better quality of life under homeopathic care than they would otherwise.

One of the joys in my life is seeing new, young patients before the development of outward disease. These are often the puppies and kittens that are brought home after the death of a previous, beloved pet. Having seen homeopathy lead to dramatic improvement in their earlier pet's chronic condition, these guardians want to "start out right" with their new companion.

On a beautiful fall day in November 2002, one such patient came bounding into my office. Daisy was a vivacious 9-week-old Golden Retriever puppy who

had been part of her new family for almost 5 weeks. The family had lost their 7-year-old Golden Retriever 9 months earlier to leukemia after a lifetime of suppression with conventional treatment.

Healthier breeding

This popular breed is just one of many that are getting sicker at younger ages and having shorter lifespans. Daisy had been bred, however, by one of the new generation of “holistic” breeders who are trying to improve breeds by raising their dogs more naturally.

These breeders typically start by feeding a species-appropriate, fresh-food diet and by minimizing vaccinations. Eventually, they often knock on my door or that of some other veterinary homeopath in order to avoid unnecessary drugs. Despite what they’ve been told, many breeders understand intuitively that what they have been doing (suppressing symptoms), often for decades, is just not working. Homeopathy is the medical treatment of first choice for their dogs.

A wiggly little teddy bear

Daisy was a wiggly bundle of joy who looked like a little teddy bear. Her history and examination would be considered “normal” by an allopathic veterinarian. What I found were common signs of imbalance—but they were not “normal” from a homeopathic perspective. These included morning eye discharge significant enough to be cleaned daily and slightly waxy ears. Daisy was also licking her vulva after urinating, as if she had a burning sensation. At six weeks of age, she had received her first puppy combination vaccine containing Distemper, Parvo, Hepatitis, Leptospirosis, and Parainfluenza.

Daisy was either born with her imbalance (latent psora inherited from her parents), or she developed it as a very young puppy. Assuming she started life in perfect health, many factors may have contributed to Daisy’s psoric signs. Vaccination at an early age, inadequate diet, external toxins, infectious agents, etc., all could have been stresses to her young body. Straining back against this stress produced the telltale symptoms that I saw at her initial examination. Daisy was not given a homeopathic prescription at this time because her symptoms were so mild.

Establishing harmony

At three months of age Daisy vomited a roundworm. Her worried guardians rushed her to the emergency center where she was treated with a dewormer. Because we all wanted to avoid unnecessary drugs in the future, I had Daisy’s guardians give her Sulphur 1M. I chose Sulphur because it seemed to correspond best to the state of imbalance that I saw in Daisy: the nondescript runny eyes, waxy ears, and licking after urination.

Three weeks later she began developing swelling and blistering of her right ear. It was also now filled with pus and quite itchy. She was also teething. These new symptoms can be found in the materia medica of Sulphur. I decided that this must be a mini “proving” and was evidence that the remedy was working according to the law of similars. Aside from her yucky ear, Daisy seemed fine so I decided to give her body one more week to do a better job of reestablishing harmony within itself.

Significant discomfort

I saw Daisy again only two days later when she became significantly worse. During this examination she was a little less bouncy than previously. She was also running a low-grade fever of 102.6. She appeared to be in considerable discomfort and was now frequently shaking her head and scratching her ear. To make matters worse, now her left ear was also getting red.

Because the ear inflammation was getting worse, and Daisy was beginning to show systemic signs of illness, I did not want to wait any longer. Even though I believed this was not a true acute illness but rather a flare-up of her chronic disease, I decided to intervene with one of Hahnemann’s “acute” remedies. Hahnemann advised just such a strategy to Dr. Stapf in his letter regarding the treatment of Dr. Stapf’s wife’s acute skin infection (erysipelas) which was secondary to her chronic disease. (See *Life and Letters of Hahnemann* by Thomas Bradford, p. 184-185.)

I wanted to minimize any further exacerbations of Daisy’s disease, so I chose to switch from the centesimal potency scale to LM dosing. When used “as needed” (see Hahnemann’s *Organon*, footnote to paragraph 246), the LM scale is known to be more gentle. I prescribed Belladonna LM 0/1 because of the redness, swelling, inflammation, and Belladonna’s known relationship to Sulphur as being useful for the acute infections that arise during constitutional treatment with Sulphur.

The day after one dose of Belladonna 0/1, Daisy was improved. She acted better, her left ear was no longer red, the swelling was going down in her right ear, and she was barely scratching it. Even though she was better, her guardians elected to run some tests to try to get an idea of what was going on inside their poor puppy. Though such tests are often not germane to the selection of the homeopathic remedy, I find the results useful in evaluating remedy responses and giving a prognosis. Daisy’s tests were all normal.

A novel new symptom

Over the next few days, Daisy plateaued. In addition, she manifested a novel symptom: bleeding eruptions that formed scabs came up very quickly around

guardian's dedication to working through her symptoms rather than suppressing them will reward them many times over. Daisy will live a longer and healthier life. Golden Retrievers are just one of the breeds that typically have recurring ear and other skin symptoms repeatedly suppressed over the course of their lifetime. Almost every patient I see with cancer has had such a history. Homeopathic veterinarians see these subtle symptoms as early warning signs that a deeper imbalance needs correcting to avoid the further development of chronic disease. Many breeders are now treating their dogs homeopathically to improve the health of future generations. I look forward to many years of continued health for my friend Daisy.

Sidebar:

Some early warning signs of imbalance (latent psora) in dogs and cats

Adapted from Drs. Samuel Hahnemann and Richard Pitcairn

By observing patients for over a decade, Hahnemann noticed that many of the same symptoms were appearing over and over again. These low-grade, chronic, recurring symptoms were observable before more serious diseases became evident. In his masterpiece, *The Chronic Diseases, Their Peculiar Nature and Their Homeopathic Cure*, he writes:

"Many hundred observations have gradually acquainted me with the signs, by which the internally slumbering, hitherto latent psora (itch-malady) may be recognized even in those cases where it has not yet manifested itself in any startling disease ..." p.44

When the body is in a state of optimal health, all systems are in equilibrium and no external manifestations of disequilibrium (symptoms) are apparent. Many of the subtle changes we observe in our pets are early warning signs that there is imbalance existing deep within the body. These are not "diseases" per se but rather are commonly observed deviations from this state of equilibrium. Recognizing and treating these common but abnormal early warning signs (latent psora) are critical to preventing more serious problems in the future.

Some of these symptoms are:

- Runny or red eyes
- Intermittent vomiting
- Intermittent loose stools/"sensitive stomach"
- Eating stool/dirt/plastic
- Straining to defecate
- Gassiness
- Excess thirst
- Gum redness
- Runny nose
- Frequent or difficult urination
- Red eyes
- Loss of pigment (nose, pads, coat)
- Red ears
- Rough, dry nose/pads
- Excess ear wax/discharge/"infections"
- Fearfulness/anxiety
- Thin coat/excess shedding
- Anal gland problems/scooting
- Stiffness
- Picky or excessive appetite

About the author:

Jeff Feinman, VMD, CVH, graduated in 1985 from the University of Pennsylvania with dual degrees in molecular biology and veterinary medicine. He has practiced holistic veterinary medicine in Fairfield County Connecticut since 1987 and was certified in veterinary homeopathy by the Academy of Veterinary Homeopathy in 2000. Drs. Hahnemann and Kent were his first homeopathic teachers and he then studied with Dr. Richard Pitcairn, David Little, and currently Drs. Paul Herscu and Amy Rothenberg. Aside from clinical practice he runs HomeVet® a natural petcare website (www.homevet.com) and is chairman of the Education Committee of the Academy of Veterinary Homeopathy (www.theavh.org). He can be reached at drjeff@homevet.com.

[Home](#) | [About NCH](#) | [Join Us](#) | [Contact](#) | [Site Index](#)
[Intro](#) | [Membership](#) | [Media](#) | [Research](#) | [Resources](#) | [Training](#) | [Find a Homeopath](#)

National Center for Homeopathy

801 N. Fairfax Street, Suite 306 Alexandria, Virginia 22314
(877) 624-0613 (703) 548-7790 fax: (703) 548-7792