

Homoeopathy for Animals

Dr Clare Middle, BVMS, CVA, CIAVH

What is Homoeopathy?

Homoeopathy is a natural healing medicine made from very dilute amounts of natural substances which gently encourages the body's own ability to heal itself.

Homoeopathy (which derives from *Homeo* = Like, *patho* = disease) applies the "Law of Similars" which states that a substance in very small doses can treat the symptoms it would actually cause if taken in a large dose. For example, digitalis in the Foxglove flower can cause death by heart toxicity if several whole flowers are eaten, whereas a very small amount (measured in micrograms) of digitalis extracted and made into a medicine can improve an existing heart condition by gently stimulating the body's natural healing mechanisms.

Homoeopathic principals were first described by Samuel Hahneman, a German doctor who noted that *quinine*, a drug used to treat patients with malaria, would actually cause the same symptoms of fever and pain if given in large doses.

Homoeopathy is used or recommended by a majority of doctors in Germany, England and France for certain conditions in humans. The same remedies manufactured for human use can be used for animals following the same methods of prescription. Because homoeopathic remedies are matched carefully with the full description of a patient's symptoms in order to pick the remedy most likely to work, we rely a lot on the observation and description of the animal by its owner because the animal cannot describe its symptoms to us as humans can.

Safety

Homoeopathic remedies are very safe, especially when very low potencies are used for mild, short-term conditions, eg bee sting reactions, muscle sprains, headaches, hay fever. It is possible for people with only a little knowledge to use these "over the counter" low potency remedies.

For long-term or severe cases, eg long standing allergies, cancer, entrenched infections, etc, it is necessary to consult a qualified homoeopathy because many "layers" of disease need to be treated sequentially and it is possible to complicate the situation if the wrong high potency or remedy is used. High potency remedies should not be available for sale directly to the public.

Handling and Storage

It is preferable to give most remedies directly into the mouth—the drops can be an approximate number. Dose at least 15 minutes away from eating, preferably before food. Any gum or mucous membrane tissue inside the mouth can absorb the drops; it is not necessary to actually open the animal's mouth right up. Lower potencies can be given in the water bowl. As long as 1/3 to 1/2 of the water is drunk each day enough remedy will be absorbed. Recent research shows that remedies can be given in milk, but not food.

If touched to the animal's mouth, the bottle tip or dropper should be sterilised with boiling water before replacing the lid back to the bottle, if the remedy needs to last more than 10 days. If "floaty bits" appear in the liquid, ask for a new bottle of remedy.

Store homoeopathics on a shelf out of direct sunlight, heat at least a metre away from power points, microwaves or strong volatile oils or chemicals. Do not store in the fridge as condensation may loosen the lid.

Homoeopathy for Animals

Dr Clare Middle, BVMS, CVA, CIAVH

What Results to Expect

For acute or short term problems, eg bee sting reaction, a correspondingly rapid result should be seen in minutes or hours. For chronic or long term conditions, eg skin allergy which has been present for several months or years, then a slower healing time can be expected, in 2 to 6 weeks in most chronic cases. After the first "layer" has been treated, the animal should be brighter and happier with some noticeable improvement in physical signs. Further physical improvement then gradually occurs.

A review consultation 3-4 weeks after initial treatment is a good idea because a different remedy may be needed to treat the next "layer". If homoeopathics do not work at all, then either the correct remedy/remedies were not chosen due to difficulty in assessing the animal's symptoms—they can't tell us how they feel! - or rarely, there simply is not a remedy which fits well in some cases.

Another possibility could be that the patient's vital force is too low, as in the case of very old animals, or the patient may have been given suppressive conventional drugs for too long, eg corticosteroids or excessive vaccinations for that individual. These cases may benefit more from a natural diet with nutrients and herbs to build up the immune system. There could be a physical block present, eg a spinal subluxation, which may benefit from physical correction first.

Sometimes an animal may seem a bit worse for a day or two only, before improvement occurs. This is called a healing aggravation or crises, and indicates change and healing. Contact me if this doesn't settle after one or two days.

Dr Clare Middle, BVMS, CVA, CIAVH

Tel: (08) 9494 1243

Fax (08) 9494 1209

P O Box 1341

Bibra Lake

WA 6965

www.claremiddle.com