



ANIMAL ANTICS

Note for Pet Owners:

Pet Patrol 365 provides this information for educational purposes only. You should seek the advice of your veterinarian if your pet is ill, as only they can correctly advise on the diagnosis and the recommended treatment for your pet.

ACUPUNCTURE & ARTHRITIS

Acupuncture has evolved from the ancient art of placing needles into special locations on the body, to alleviate pain and increase the recovery rate and resistance to disease. It is a system of healing which the Chinese and other Eastern cultures have practiced for thousands of years and may be used to treat a wide variety of illnesses. The Chinese approach is to restore equilibrium between physical, emotional and spiritual factors, thus restoring and maintaining health, whilst the Western view is the treatment of musculoskeletal disorders and, in particular, chronic pain states in animals. For the purposes of this article, we are looking at arthritis.

Acupuncture increases circulation to the muscles and joint capsule, which provides more oxygen and slows cell degeneration. It also relieves painful muscle spasms, increases leg strength by stimulating nerves and muscles, releases endorphins to make the animal feel better and stimulates the immune system.

Arthritis or joint inflammation is normally associated with older animals. This type of arthritis is called osteoarthritis and is generally due to “wear and tear”. Occasionally joint inflammation in the younger animal occurs through injury, infection or disease of the immune system. Symptoms include stiffness and pain in the joints and possible lameness.

Suitability

- No other medicines or treatments are required in-between treatments to maintain the pain killing effect.
- Needles are only used once and are sterile, so there are no health risks.
- Only side effects are that a few animals experience a “temporary” aggravation of symptoms, i.e. getting worse before getting better. This is simply the body’s natural reaction to the condition.
- Regular sessions are necessary.
- The occasional animal may be a little anxious whilst the needles are being inserted.

Contraindications

As a cure is not always possible, acupuncture is predominantly used for chronic pain. Positive responses can result in reduced symptoms or the disappearance of symptoms and increased mobility so that the quality of life of your canine, feline or equine friend can be improved or restored. Acupuncture can be used on its own or as a complement to conventional treatments, and with positive effects sometimes resulting in the reduced or removal of drug usage.

The Veterinary Surgeons Act 1966 restricts the treatment of animals (other than your own) with acupuncture, by anyone other than a fully qualified veterinary surgeon. Qualified acupuncturists who treat humans are not legally able to treat animals, unless they have a veterinary qualification (MRCVS) and belong to the Association of British Veterinary Acupuncturists <http://www.abva.co.uk>.

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01342 851333 / 07974 728967

www.petpatrol365.co.uk

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