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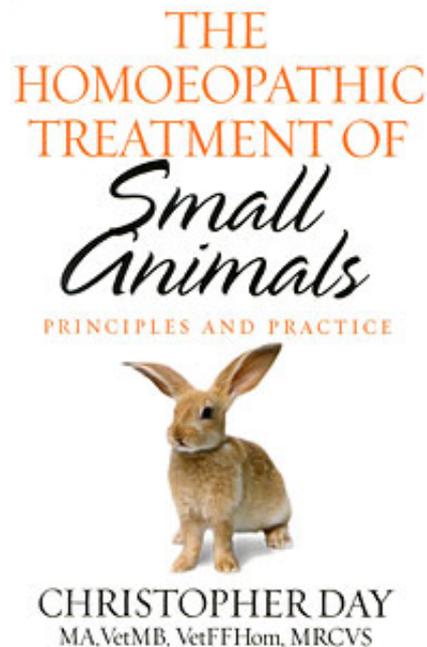
The Homeopathic Treatment of Small Animals

Leseprobe

[The Homeopathic Treatment of Small Animals](#)

von [Christopher Day](#)

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CHAPTER 2

When to Call the Vet

Not for nothing have veterinarians undergone five or six years of rigorous training. Their accumulated knowledge on the variability, scope and effect of disease, their ability to assess seriousness of a case, their ability to institute such correct dietary, supportive, nursing and management procedures as can aid a cure are all to be greatly respected, *whether or not they practise homoeopathy*. It is also notably difficult to be objective about one's own family and the same applies to one's own pets. The veterinarian can provide the valuable objectivity needed. I commend you to re-read Hahnemann's words quoted on p. 11 taken from the opening paragraphs of the Organon. These words call for a high level of dedication and understanding. Only by persistent practice, constant reading, repeated harsh lessons of experience and by encountering the sheer variety of reaction to disease shown by a multiplicity of patients are veterinarians able to be aware of what is to be cured in disease (that is noticing all the symptoms). Only by these same lessons and experiences can they be aware of what is curative in medicines (that is, the 'provings' in the *Materia Medica*). Only by constant practice can they learn to match symptoms to provings, choose the correct remedy, dose at the required level, at the required frequency for an adequate duration. Only through training and experience can he or she learn the nursing and management tricks necessary to 'removing the obstacles to recovery'. Although Hahnemann is talking about the practice of homoeopathy, conventional veterinary medicine should also have much to offer in this respect and owners should not lightly undertake the treatment of

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their own animals unless they feel competent to assess the seriousness of the case unaided.

This is not to say that pet owners, safe in the knowledge that homoeopathic medicines have no side effects, cannot usefully set to work to treat their own pets, using guidelines set down in this book and using the handy reference chapters on disease syndromes and remedies (Chapters 8-14). However, what they must try to do is to be aware of what is dangerous in the way of disease and what is not dangerous, what is serious and what is not so serious, what is acute and what is chronic, what may benefit from veterinary help and what absolutely requires it, what requires immediate action and what is not so desperate. All this seems to be asking rather a lot but most of it should be instinctive. One must learn how to let instincts come to the surface of awareness. Those who have experience of children and their ailments should know what is meant by all these considerations. An infant is very similar in the problems set for parent and doctor to a pet and the problems it sets for carer and veterinarian. The dramatic effect upon the demeanour of child or pet by acute disease, the lack of verbal communication about symptoms, the concern felt by parent or pet-carer, all are very similar. Since so many people have contact with infants in health and sickness this should give them confidence to deal more certainly with their pet's ailments. The human race has deeply rooted instincts in relation to management of disease in its children. These should be given full rein when it comes to considering one's pets' problems.

In Chapters 8-14, those conditions where veterinary help should most certainly be sought are marked as such. Other conditions can reasonably be considered for treatment at home. Also remember that no condition is so serious that a home remedy, immediately administered prior to veterinary attention, cannot be of benefit and support. Although, in many cases, subsequent conventional veterinary medicine can counteract a homoeopathic remedy given at home, there are no cases where a homoeopathic remedy can conflict with the subsequent conventional treatment to the detriment of the patient. This knowledge should encourage immediate home first aid medicine.

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Now to apply logic to determine the kind of conditions wherein homoeopathy alone should not be used, whether by veterinarian or pet carer. This is not to say that homoeopathy cannot help in such cases, it almost certainly can, since most of these conditions do not confine their effect to the locality of the body in which they occur but have a general effect as well. Consider them in more detail and this will become clear.

The first type to be considered are those rare conditions in which a bacterial infection is running its course in such a violent manner as to render the 'vital force' more or less unable to fight back. If a homoeopathic remedy alone is used under these circumstances - however correct that remedy might be - the condition may proceed unabated, owing to the tremendous hold the bacterial infection has e.g. meningitis, acute septicaemia, leptospiral jaundice. If however the appropriate antibiotic is given (the domain of the veterinarian who alone understands the factors affecting choice and administration of these medicines) the downward trend in the patient can be temporarily reversed, releasing the 'vital force' from this stranglehold and leaving room for the appropriate homoeopathic remedy to effect a complete and lasting cure. In this manner one is using (as suggested in the introduction to this book) the best of both worlds. One cannot, in one's right mind, adhere to homoeopathy and shut out modern scientific developments to the detriment of the patient and not be accused of gross folly or neglect. It is possible that those who are totally proficient in homoeopathy can minimise the use of antibiotic or do without it altogether but *unless one has that skill and confidence* the patient must not be jeopardised.

Another set of circumstances where one may not be able to sit back and leave it to homoeopathy alone is the realm of injury. Again there are valuable homoeopathic remedies which can be relied upon to restore health in cases of minor injury (see Chapters 8-14) and help tremendously in cases of major injury (who can deny the marvellous effects of *Arnica* for instance?) but again one would be sadly neglecting one's duty if one failed to staunch the flow of blood from a wound by appropriate methods, stitch a large wound to aid healing, immobilize a fracture or severe strain to prevent pain and further

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damage, remove an injurious foreign body (if this action is necessary to recovery), replace dislocations, use surgery to repair any internal damage that is preventing recovery or institute measures to prevent any external influence which can impede the healing process. If one fails to do these one fails to fulfil the resolutions laid down on p. 11 of Chapter 1. It would do no harm to read these resolutions again now. A veterinarian is bound by these as rules of the profession but a pet carer who takes upon himself the medicinal care of a pet must also take these resolutions to heart, calling for help when needed. He becomes, for the moment, the 'physician' to whom Hahnemann refers, but must know when to refer the patient to a qualified veterinarian for more specialised help.

A third circumstance where, again, one should not lean entirely on homoeopathy, is the field of necessary surgery. Congenital reparable defects should be repaired by the appropriate surgical method if they constitute a threat to the animal's health. Abdominal catastrophes must be dealt with in the appropriate manner e.g. a swallowed foreign body (many cannot pass), intussusception (many will not self correct), abdominal adhesions which produce malfunction of the bowel and many other circumstances of a like nature. (Physiological dysfunction of the bowel can probably be corrected non-surgically by the appropriate homoeopathic methods.) Cancerous growths should only be removed if they constitute an immediate threat to health or life (rather than rely on homoeopathy to cure such growths) at the same time using a homoeopathic remedy to correct the state of the 'vital force' which is predisposed to this condition in the first place. Removal of a cancerous growth is dangerous because it removes the ability of the clinician to monitor the disease and may excite secondary growths. It is therefore a technique to be reserved only as an emergency life-saver or to 'buy time'. There may be no substitute to surgery to correct anatomical defects bred into an animal by successive malpractice of some early animal breeders. Such hereditary defects include ear or eye deformities of spaniels and blood hounds and leg deformities of many miniature breeds. It goes without saying, if a veterinarian meets such conditions in a breeding establishment, that he will do all in his power to influence that breeder and others to try to eliminate the condition

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by good breeding practice and will only correct such conditions surgically if it is to the benefit of the animal in question to do so.

It is sometimes necessary, as a last resort, to institute major surgery such as castration or ovariectomy to correct a condition which fails (for whatever reason) to respond to homoeopathy but again the appropriate homoeopathic remedy will prove an invaluable aid to recovery. Such surgical procedures may be forced upon us by the very act of domestication which brings an animal out of its natural environment and evolved social structure, so leading to intractable physical, physiological or psychological, sexually-oriented problems.

It is not always necessary to resort to surgery to correct dental problems or urethral obstruction or to relieve severe impacted constipation by mechanical means, a homoeopathic remedy may effect a cure; but undue delay or home experimentation is not to be encouraged. These conditions can be very serious if left unrelieved, especially in the case of urinary obstruction.

In nearly all cases of surgery, another non-homoeopathic procedure is required, that of anaesthesia. In this procedure one unashamedly resorts to chemical usage, with all its attendant risks and side effects, for humane reasons. It is in fact illegal to carry out surgery without appropriate anaesthesia and rightly so in the light of medical knowledge. Acupuncture can act as a substitute for anaesthetic agents and is often used in China but is little used in this country or the rest of the world as yet. Homoeopathy can be used to lessen the side effects and after effects of anaesthetics, and should be used for this purpose. One day acupuncture may supersede some use of chemical anaesthesia in animals but there are difficulties not met in the human sphere.

Fluid therapy is often used as a support to a failing system, where rehydration or rebalancing is required. While the use of a correct homoeopathic remedy may well do away with the need for this technique in many cases, it should not be relied upon in every case and there are occasions in which the urgency of the situation prevents the home prescriber from finding the correct homoeopathic remedy in time.

When the vital force seems to be no longer able to fight a disease influence in aged animals, and a terminal situation has been reached,

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then exploitation of the undoubted palliative effects of drugs may be justified if there is still a chance for reasonable quality of life thereby. The risk of side effects of drugs in these sad situations is a more academic consideration, since life is not expected to be long (and the dangers of side-effects have to be less than those of euthanasia!).

The author hopes in this chapter to have illustrated the place of veterinary advice, the place of veterinary skills and the place of non-homoeopathic methods. One is left, in the final instance, to make one's own decision whether or not to consult a veterinarian but one must remember *when in doubt - consult*. Veterinarians often ask the advice of colleagues too! The most important single contribution the veterinarian is able to make for you and your pet is his or her ability to carry out a full examination, including objective observation and evaluation of symptoms and history. The veterinary training and experience give a tremendous lead over anyone who tries to do this without the advantage of such training. This capacity must not be underestimated. If it is humanly possible to avoid the mistreatment and mismanagement of a case resulting from failure to notice important symptoms, then it is more likely that a veterinarian will avoid these errors than the untrained, however enlightened and intelligent, lay person. To illustrate these points further I refer you to Chapters 4/5/6.

It is not my place to discuss veterinary professional ethics in this book but it is worth reminding both homoeopathic veterinary surgeons and pet owners that homoeopathic medicine in animals is still veterinary medicine even if it uses no drugs as we understand the word. A case referred to a homoeopathic veterinary surgeon after conventional treatment still requires, for the good of the patient, the customary inter-veterinary communication. Otherwise one fails in one's duty to learn all one can of the patient and its history. It is also to be recommended that veterinary surgeons do not yield to the temptation, put in their paths by distance, to prescribe *without first seeing the patient* so that one can, in the best veterinary and homoeopathic traditions, extract as much information from the history-taking sessions as possible. There are, sadly, still times when homoeopathy fails to achieve a cure. This is almost certainly due not so much to the patient's failure to respond to homoeopathy but more to one's

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inability to read correctly all the symptoms and history. I refer you to Chapter 5 on selection of remedy to explain this statement and the limitations imposed on veterinary homoeopathy by the animal's inability to talk! This makes it very important to use one's diagnostic ability to the utmost and distance is not conducive to increasing one's chances of success.

If you wish to visit a veterinarian using homoeopathy it is advisable to ascertain whether that veterinarian is well enough versed in homoeopathy to be able to take on the particular problem and species concerned. When visiting a veterinarian for a homoeopathic second opinion it will be necessary to provide a full case history from your own original veterinarian. The homoeopathic colleague will then write back to the referring veterinarian. This is a routine course of action for veterinarians and they are obliged to help you in this way.

THE
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PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICE



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