

Tending the Wind – Chapter 5
Homeopathy – Part 3
by Dr. Lauren Chattigré

Among the various alternative therapies available, homeopathy probably raises the greatest philosophical objection to conventional medicine. Homeopathic purists often won't even take a case under consideration if other medicines are being used (including herbs). The reasoning behind this is the thought that any medicine which isn't the *simillimum* will cause further mistunement to the vital force, sending the disease deeper – a concept called *suppression*.

Some homeopaths are adamant regarding the incompatibility of allopathic and homeopathic methods. (*Allopathy* is defined as any method of treatment using substances that produce effects *different* from those caused by the disease. The use of bitter, cooling herbs to treat a hot condition is an example.) Others take the more moderate position that mechanical and chemical measures can be employed to palliate physical ailments while the remedy helps the vital force to complete the cure from within...the middle path, so to speak. Still others feel that as long as the adjunct method chosen also addresses the totality of the patient in a holistic manner (e.g. acupuncture and Chinese herbs) their vibrational effects will be in tune with the homeopathic remedy, and aid its action.

The issue of suppression is important to you, as your pet's advocate, because you must decide for him or her in the midst of all these different opinions. New clients sometimes arrive torn and anxious because their other homeopathic veterinarian has told them they mustn't use any allopathic medications with the remedy, but their conventional veterinarian says their pet will suffer unduly if they don't. Here are some considerations which may help you in deciding what to do:

1. If there's one thing conventional medicine is good at, it's handling acute and serious illness. There are situations that don't grant any time to see if a remedy is going to work. And there are life-threatening illnesses that require strong intervention. Once the patient is physically stable, there will be time enough to institute more gentle and holistic measures. People don't expect homeopathy to fix a fractured bone without surgery, and they shouldn't expect it to work alone for other equally imperative situations.
2. It is reasonable to take measures to improve the comfort of the patient while homeopathy has a chance to work. Hippocrates himself said that concurrent supportive physical and nutritional measures work best using the principle of opposites while the dynamic cure is being addressed with similars. I've seen many cases in which significant healing did not begin using one approach until the other was added, and vice versa. Nor does every ailment require homeopathic intervention; the otherwise healthy patient with no predisposing patterns may be quite capable of rebalancing with just a little outside help using allopathic support.
3. If history teaches us anything, it's that attachment to philosophical absolutes is inhibitory. Science and medicine (and any other endeavor) have only ever truly blossomed because of paradigm shifts created by open minds. And the best advances are always achieved within an atmosphere of tolerance and thoughtful discussion.

There is no doubt that certain drugs have been overused in conventional medicine, and that the ideal situation is to enhance the patient's own healing capacity. Homeopathy can initiate change on profound levels, and help release deeply held patterns of illness as well as provide relief for acute ailments. But to call every use of allopathic agents a suppressive act is not only to ignore a multitude of beneficial medical traditions from various cultures, but also to assume the body is incapable of harmoniously assimilating dissimilar substances.

My own experience using homeopathy in conjunction with other methods has been quite favorable. I have seen homeopathy speed recovery time after allopathic methods were begun, and continue the healing process once those methods were stopped. I have

seen homeopathy work synergistically with other alternative methods like acupuncture and herbs. And I have seen homeopathy work even in conjunction with overtly suppressive agents. Ultimately, the question is quite simple – is the patient, as a whole, getting better or not? As the person who spends more time with your animal friends than anyone else, you are best equipped to answer that question, and to ask for help on their behalf.



One last topic related to homeopathy should be introduced before moving on to chiropractic. *Nosodes* are potentized preparations made from diseased tissues, discharges, and other body matter. Their use in homeopathy has grown from Hahnemann's theory of *miasms* (from the Greek for "defilement" or "taint"), which represent certain archetypal disease patterns transmitted through the ages. These then become inherited tendencies or predispositions. An example is the miasm called Psora (meaning "itch"), which can be described in broad strokes as an ongoing struggle to maintain oneself in a world full of external stressors. Physically, this may manifest as an inability to kick an infestation or infection, to alleviate an allergy, or to recover from a reaction. Mental symptoms may include obsessive-compulsive behavior, self-doubt, or depression. Psorinum is the associated nosode, made from the scabies vesicle. (The vesicle, or blister, is formed from the burrowing of the scabies mite into skin.)

In addition to nosodes for the archetypal miasms, there are nosodes made from a plethora of other diseases, including veterinary ones such as CDV (Canine Distemper Virus) and FeLV (Feline Leukemia Virus). The use of nosodes to treat patients suffering from the *same* specific disease (as opposed to homeopathy's similar disease) is called *isopathy*. Hahnemann warned against isopathy, since it ignores the unique attributes of the individual patient and their personal response to disease, and focuses only on the named disease itself. Nosodes tend to be reserved for those patients whose individual *simillimum* is difficult to identify, or whose body has been so thoroughly overtaken by the disease that the *simillimum* is ineffective. In certain cases, of course, the nosode *is* the *simillimum*, and so its use would be truly homeopathic.

Over the years, the isopathic use of nosodes has been extended to prophylaxis for specific diseases during times of epidemic outbreak, and even as a form of routine childhood vaccination. This has led to the use of animal nosodes in lieu of vaccination by many veterinary homeopaths. Some start nosodes after the kitten or puppy vaccine series, and some use them exclusively. Their efficacy in prophylaxis, however, has not been adequately demonstrated (especially for the more deadly diseases like parvovirus). For this reason, I don't generally recommend them unless the disease in question is relatively mild anyway (e.g. Kennel Cough), the animal is at high risk for adverse reaction to vaccination, or no vaccine exists for the disease. Each case must be considered individually, and with full understanding of the potential risks involved. Fortunately, blood tests called titers are now available to determine if adult dogs and cats need booster vaccines. And many boarding kennels, day care facilities, and training classes now accept an adequate titer in lieu of vaccination for select diseases.

In the case of epidemics, Hahnemann did use homeopathic remedies for prophylaxis, selected as the *simillimum* to a general presentation of the disease. These were usually not nosodes, but simply substances with similar symptom profiles to most of the patients struck down by the disease. Hahnemann would study the symptoms in a range of people representing several different constitutional types to determine common aspects in their response to the epidemic, and then choose his preventive remedy. He measured great success with remedies such as Belladonna for a scarlet fever outbreak. Since then more success has been recorded with remedies such as Gelsemium and Arsenicum during flu outbreaks, and Veratrum album for cholera. Different remedies may be selected for the same named disease depending on the most widely represented symptom profile during a particular epidemic. This same process could also be applied to epidemics in veterinary

medicine to help prevent and treat a wide range of exposed animals quickly; as time permitted, each individual animal's simillimum could then be more accurately determined if necessary.