

# animals & homoeopathy

**A**nimals respond to Homoeopathic remedies in much the same way as people. There are many similarities between animal and human health problems and of course some important differences. However this is not such a problem for the homoeopathic prescriber as the remedy choice is based upon the 'symptoms' presented.

Consult your veterinarian for chronic problems and when the situation seems out of the scope of your homoeopathic experience. There are vets who use natural therapies in their practices and are open to your use of homoeopathy.

Homoeopathy is a medical system developed by Samuel Hahnemann 200 years ago. It is well known in the United Kingdom, America, Europe and Asia and to a lesser extent Australia. Homoeopathy follows definite scientific laws of preparation, prescription and cure which are as true today as they were in Dr Hahnemann's time.

Homoeopathic medicines are provided in either pilules or drops and the dose varies depending upon individual need. These medicines have been prepared in a specific way by a process called potentisation. This is an activating process involving dilution and succussion (shaking hard) which makes the remedies non-toxic and free from side effects. This means that the Homoeopathic medicine will not affect or influence any other prescribed medicines.

## Accidents, Injuries & Fight Wounds

For shock with fear - **Aconite**. Bruising, trauma and shock - **Arnica**, use immediately there is an accident or injury and repeat four hourly or as needed. For nerve damage, crushed paws or tail, spinal injuries, splinters, puncture wounds, bites and stings - **Hypericum**. Animal bites - **Ledum**.

**Fight wounds:** The following remedies work well however some cats may require surgery. At the first sign of fighting give **Arnica** and **Hypericum** or **Ledum**. Initially 2-3 doses over a 12 hour period. If an abscess has formed **Hepar Sulph** followed by **Silica**. For lacerated or incised wounds - **Staphysagria**. Chronic infections, abscesses and draining fistulas - **Silica**.

Management issues include sterilisation of non-breeding cats, keeping them indoors especially at night and regular handling to detect wounds before they become abscesses.

## Anal Glands

Peaceful, domesticated animals do not always display territorial behaviour and squirt their anal glands, so they can become blocked and need emptying by your vet. If they are fed a natural diet with plenty of vegetables (for the fibre), to help empty the glands during defaecation they are less likely to become blocked. Blocked glands are characterised by scratching and discomfort around the bottom and a generally miserable demeanor.

For infected glands use **Calc Sulph** or **Hepar Sulph** followed by **Silica**. **Silica** is a slow acting eliminator so long term treatment may be needed in cases of recurrent blockages.

## Bites & Stings

Spring and summer brings bee and wasp chasing with puppies and kittens. Be ready with **Apis** or **Urtica Urens** and repeat often as this can be dangerous if the throat swells - seek veterinary care if in doubt. Insect bites and puncture wounds respond well to **Ledum**.

## Constipation

Careful attention to and adjustment of the diet is essential. Stool large, dry and hard. No straining - **Bryonia**. Straining that is ineffectual - **Nux Vomica**. Constipation in old, weak animals - **Alumina**.

## Coughs, Colds & Runny Noses

Give **vitamin C** powder, about 2000 to 4000mg twice daily for a few days, and a human dose of immune boosting herb such as **Echinacea**, **Andrographis** or **Reishi/shitaki mushroom**. A herbal cough medicine with some warm honey can also help a lot.

Early stages when the animal is feverish, thirsty and the nose is hot and dry - **Aconite**. Bland, watery discharge. Eyes red, watery and sensitive to light - **Allium**. Acrid discharge. Thirsty and restless - **Arsenicum**. Discharge whitish like egg-white. violent sneezing - **Nat Mur**. Chronic discharge, thick, tough and stringy - **Kali Bic**. Septic throat, bad breath excess saliva, thin, greenish nasal discharge - **Mercurius**. Thin grayish discharge. Crusts form inside the nose - **Silica**.

Cat flu is a common winter complaint. It usually begins with sneezing and a clear, watery nasal discharge which may become thick and yellow/green if not treated

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effectively. In some cases it can progress to bronchitis and pneumonia. Use any of the above remedies depending on the stage.

For kennel cough in dogs use **Aconite** in the early stages for a rough, loud, barking cough, especially at night. Then later, other remedies to consider include **Bryonia**, **Phosphorus**, **Drosera** and **Ant Tart**.

## Dental Health

Dogs and cats who chew raw meaty bones at least four days a week have clean white teeth and healthy gums and rarely need their teeth scaled or removed.

Cooked bone is not suitable as it is not digestible and can cause problems. Any raw bone that is a suitable size for your animal to have a good chew at (ie get its teeth into!) is safe. Raw chicken necks or raw white bait fish for cats and toy breed dogs are usually about the right size, and raw chicken wings, raw lamb necks, or raw chicken frames are good for medium to large dogs. If they are not used to chewing bones, introduce them gradually over about a month.

## Diarrhoea & Vomiting

If symptoms persist seek help from your vet as animals can dehydrate quickly. **Aconite** is very useful in the first stages of stomach upsets and diarrhoea. Vomiting and diarrhoea with loss of appetite - **Arsenicum Album**. Persistent vomiting and nausea - **Ipecac**. Vomiting yet still has an appetite - **Phosphorus**. After rich and fatty or creamy food - **Pulsatilla**. Upset stomach and bloating from overindulgence - **Nux Vomica**. Violent purging with rapid exhaustion and dehydration - **Veratrum** and seek veterinary advice.

## Dietary Needs

Dogs and cats do not thrive on packaged, processed food or an excess of food from the family table. Meat and poultry byproducts used in many commercial pet foods are often of a poor standard and may contain entrails, feathers, sawdust and various leftovers not fit for consumption. Most of the preservatives added to canned and dry foods don't even bear contemplating.

Your dogs' digestive system is designed for a mainly raw food diet and many common health problems disappear when changes are made to dietary intake. Generally speaking dogs do well on 60% raw meat and bones and 30- 40% fruit and vegetables. Add to this a good quality nutritional supplement.

Cats are strict carnivores and have a high protein requirement. Their diet should be totally raw and consist of 90% raw meat and bones, 10% vegetables and a nutritional powder supplement.

Just as humans benefit from a short period of fasting and a gentle spring detox our pets also thrive on a few days of a simple vegetable juice and broth diet to rest the digestive organs.

## Emotional Upsets

Domestic animals usually make strong emotional connections with their owners and may exhibit problems when their home life is upset. In these situations animals respond very well to carefully chosen flower essences and homoeopaths.

Problems may develop after a change involving a loss of territory, relationship or attention. Health can be affected by recurrent feelings of tension, anxiety, depression, anger and other emotional upsets in the home. The owner's attitude and expectations about illness or a disturbance may affect the pet's own health.

When seeking professional advice mention other contributing factors such as family stress and grief which may be impacting on the health or emotions of your pet. If your practitioner does not think that these factors are important then seek advice from someone with a more holistic approach.

**Anxiety and fear:** Anticipatory anxiety and excitement - **Aconite**. Fear and apprehension is common before any ordeal. Fears of heights, crowds, closed spaces etc. May have diarrhoea - **Argent Nit**. Emotional excitement and apprehension - quiet, subdued and trembling - **Gelsemium**. A heightened state of anxiety and restlessness especially in fussy, chilly animals - **Arsenicum**. Nervous animals to strengthen the nervous system - **Kali Phos**.

**Barking and behavioural problems:** Dogs bark for a variety of reasons. Some bark for the sheer joy of being alive, but persistent barking often indicates that there is a serious underlying problem.

Some common reasons for barking include: Attention seeking behaviour, territorial aggression, boredom, separation anxiety, play. Consider a flower essence combination or specific homoeopathic remedy.

**Boarding Kennels or Home Alone:** A few days before your dog or cat goes boarding, give a top up dose of **Kennel cough** 30c or **Cat Flu** 30C. Also give a few days of **Vitamin C** powder and **Echinacea/five mushroom** or other immune boosting herb in the animal's food.

Start **Ignatia** daily from a couple of days before boarding, and/or the Bach remedy combination - **Rescue Remedy** (for stress), **Honeysuckle** (for grief) and **Walnut** (for adaptation to change).

**Grief, separation and stress:** Anxious and restless, fears change - **Arsenicum**. Clingy and moody - **Pulsatilla**.

Sad, sighing and changeable, off their food – **Ignatia**. Withdrawn and wants to be alone – **Nat Mur**.

**Jealousy:** Animals established in a home may suffer emotional problems when new arrivals appear. Consider **Nat Mur** or **Ignatia**. **Lachesis** if they are vicious and attack the newcomer. **Pulsatilla** if they demand attention, a remedy for sibling rivalry. **Staphysagria** for sulking, growling and withdrawal. Also **Star of Bethlehem**, **Holly**, **Walnut**, **Willow**, **Beech** and **Honeysuckle**.

## Fleas

Homoeopathically **Pulex Irritans** made from “flea” can be taken internally to boost resistance. The essential oils **Bergamot**, **Eucalyptus**, **Geranium** and **Lavender** are effective insect repellents.

Add the oils to a bath or sponge through a mixture in tepid water. For cats stroking through a few drops on the palm may be easier. A spritzer sprayed around bedding, carpets and doorways acts as a deterrent.

Add ample nutritional or brewers yeast and garlic to the diet and steer clear of chemical insecticides and shampoos that are dangerous to the animal and to family members who breathe in the chemicals.

## Heat Exhaustion

Heat exhaustion is serious and requires rapid cooling and monitoring of body temperature; immerse the animal in cold water being very careful not to over cool the body and contact your vet for advice.

Restless with intense thirst and high anxiety - **Aconite**. Prostration, trembling - **Gelsemium**. Pulse strong and rapid, pupils fixed and dilated, sensitive to noise, light and movement - **Belladonna**.

Face congested, rolling of head from side to side, no thirst - **Apis**. Clammy and collapsed - **Carbo veg**.

## Immunisation

This is a complicated issue and differs from case to case. However the following points should be considered:

- If vaccinating give the homoeopathic disease nosode as well.
- Only give puppies and kittens the necessary vaccines individually rather than the 5 in one.
- Wait until the animal is at least 8 weeks old.
- Before giving boosters ask your vet to check antibody levels with a blood test.
- See your holistic vet for a more individual approach to vaccination or if you feel your animal is suffering ill health as the result of vaccines.

## Joint Pain & Arthritis

As animals age they may be slower to rise due to stiffness, experiencing lameness from sore muscles or joints. There are several things that you can do to minimise their discomfort.

Feed a natural diet - thereby ensuring an adequate intake of the nutrients required to support ligament and bone repair. Add **vitamin E** and **vitamin C** 500 - 2000mg per day depending upon size. The herb **Alfalfa** is extremely rich in nutrients and alkalizing. It improves the appetite and supports the digestion and joints by balancing the over-acid system. **Garlic** is also important for the joints and can be added to the diet. In addition these animals benefit from sleeping on a padded, raised bed, warmth and non-weight bearing exercise (eg swimming).

Acute symptoms with swelling, redness, pain and possibly fever responds well to **Belladonna**. **Rhus Tox** suits inflammation, pain and stiffness which is most apparent when the animal gets up after a long rest. Once moving about it starts to loosen and feel better. **Bryonia** symptoms are much worse from movement, better from firm pressure and lying still. **Silica** is important in symptoms when the joint stiffness, pain and distortion gets worse as the animal gets older and can be given regularly with other indicated **Tissue Salts** to support the joints and calcium metabolism.

## Pregnancy Birth & Baby Animals

**Pregnancy:** Give **Arnica** in the final week to reduce soft tissue damage during labour. To ensure healthy bones and reduce the incidence of mastitis and calcium deficiency problems start **Calc Phos** a week or two before the due date.

**Birthing and after:** Fearful and anxious – **Aconite**. Four hourly during labour to reduce bruising and promote repair - **Arnica** Stimulates contractions, useful in labour if progress is slow - **Caulophyllum**. Clingy, sad, moody and wants company and consolation - **Pulsatilla**. Indifference to the babies and wants to be left alone - **Sepia**.

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minimum dose maximum impact

## Pregnancy etc. [contd]

**Feeding and mastitis:** Teat area hot, swollen, pupils dilated, full pulse, excited - **Belladonna**. Teat very hard, general limb stiffness - **Bryonia**. Averse to touch due to pain - **Hepar Sulph**. To increase milk supply - **Urtica Urens**. Recurring mastitis - **Calc Carb**.

**Ailments of Puppies:** Puppies who have not had a very good start to life and have weak appetites, poor coats and rickety joints respond well to **Calc Phos**.

## Skin

When dogs and cats scratch a great deal despite every hygienic and local measure try either **Sulphur** (hot, greedy and often rather smelly) or **Arsenicum** (chilly, nervous and always grooming themselves). Boils, pimples and pussy eruptions - **Hepar Sulph**. Hair loss, ringworm - **Sepia**. Acute, wet eczema - **Rhus Tox**.

Pustules, boils, diseased claws and delicate skin that doesn't heal well - **Silica**. **Silica** in conjunction with **Kali Sulph** is excellent for conditioning the coat. **Kali Sulph** is indicated for sore paws with scaling of the skin. **Hepar Sulph**, **Graphites** or **Silica** - for cysts between the toes.

## Tissue Salts

Working at a cellular level tissue salts help balance and improve the absorption and uptake of minerals and nutrients.

## Surgery

In the event that your animal needs surgery give **Arnica** and **Hypericum** 4 hourly, preferably starting a day or two before the surgery and continue for a few days to promote healing. For abdominal surgery add **Bellis Perennis**. Surgery involving bone and ligaments - **Ruta Grav**. Adverse reactions to anaesthetics - **Phosphorus**.

## Travel Sickness

Give 2 or 3 doses before travel. If the usual reaction is very severe, start the day before travel. Severe nausea and dizziness - **Cocculus**. Nausea, vomiting and excess saliva - **Ipecac**. Nausea and dizziness from fumes - **Petroleum**. Digestive disturbance, nausea - **Nux Vomica**.

## Urinary Problems & Cystitis

Examination and diagnosis by your vet is important as animals can die quickly of kidney failure if the bladder is totally blocked. Classic cystitis, with the typical frequency of passing urine and associated pain - **Cantharis**. Absence of urine, a few doses of **Apis** helps to encourage urination. Incontinence in a spayed animal, helpful for dogs who dribble urine when excited - **Pulsatilla**. Incontinence during the early part of the night - **Sepia**.

## Worms

The best time to worm your animals is in the days before the full moon, as this is when the worms are more active and therefore easier to remove from the body. **Cina** is the most commonly used remedy for worming.