

WOOFS & HOOFS ANIMAL MASSAGE

NATURAL HEALING FOR PETS

BI-MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

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HAPPY VALENTINE'S DAY FROM WOOFs & HOOFS

Love for your fellow man and, of course, your pet is what is called for this month. At Woofs and Hoofs, we want to help you keep your pet healthy and happy. In this issue, we learn about the eyesight problems in cats and discuss equine colic. We also continue with our regular features—Acupressure Point, Rub the Right Way, and Recommended Reading. And of course, we share a delicious recipe.

EYE PROBLEMS IN CATS

Cats are known for their excellent sight. However, this does not mean that they do not suffer from eye problems like they rest of the animal world. Like humans the can also have conditions that affect their vision.

Two of the main eye conditions that can affect cats are cataracts and glaucoma. As in humans, a cataract in a cat's eye means that the lens has turned opaque. If it is left untreated, a cataract can turn into glaucoma. Glaucoma, which is increased pressure within the eye, is one of the main causes of blindness in cats. If glaucoma is caught in its early stage, it can be treated with medication. In more advanced cases, surgery may be necessary.

Other eye conditions that can result in blindness in cats are tumours and progressive retinal atrophy (PRA). A tumour on the eyelid may result in the removal of the entire eye. PRA is hereditary and is currently untreatable. It occurs slowly and is not painful, but PRA does result in total blindness.

Other causes of eye problems in cats are injury, conjunctivitis and hypertension. If a cat is injured near the eye, they should be seen by a vet immediately. Conjunctivitis is the inflammation or reddening of the membrane that lines the eyelid. On-going treatment by a vet or a veterinary ophthalmologist is often required. Finally, hypertension can cause sudden blindness in cats. Some of the early signs to look out for are dilated pupils that do not respond to light and blood in the eye. Hypertension is often caused by another underlying condition such as diabetes, hyperthyroidism or kidney disease.

Like humans, cats are more likely to suffer from one of the conditions listed above as they get older. However, one area that will affect cats of any age is their diet.

Taurine is a nutrient that is critical for a cat's healthy vision. A cat cannot produce taurine. If a cat does not receive enough taurine in their diet, their retina will start to deteriorate. If the diet is not changed, the cat will become totally blind within a few years.

Taurine is already supplied as a diet supplement in cat food. However, it is not in dog food or in homemade diets. Dog food should never be fed to cats. However, a homemade or raw diet is fine. You will need to add taurine supplements thought to keep your cat healthy. The actual amount of the supplement will depend on your cat's weight and current taurine levels so you should seek veterinary advice if you think your cat may need a supplement.

ANIMAL TRIVIA

Did you know?

- The heart of a blue whale is as big as a car.
- Frogs' and lizards' hearts have three chambers. Birds' and mammals' hearts have four.
- Octopi have three hearts.
- Some people believe that if a woman sees a robin-flying overhead on Valentine's Day, it means she will marry a sailor, and if she sees a sparrow, she will marry a poor man and be very happy. If she sees a goldfinch, she will marry a very rich person.



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COLIC IN HORSES: WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW?

Colic refers to any pain in the abdomen of a horse. This pain can be caused by a range of things from those that are mild to those that are life threatening. Because it is very difficult during the early stages to determine exactly what the problem is, any equine abdominal pain should be taken very seriously.

The major types of colic are as follows:

- Impaction colic – The intestine is blocked with food mass. Horse usually responds well to treatment.
- Gas colic – Gas builds up in the intestine and causes pain. Horse usually responds well to treatment.
- Displacement/torsion (also called "twisted gut") – A portion of the intestine either moves position or twists. This type of colic usually causes a total blockage and requires immediate surgery.
- Enteritis/colitis – The small or large intestine becomes inflamed. This type of colic requires immediate veterinary attention.
- Gastric distension/rupture – Occurs when a horse over eats grain or eats a substance that expands when dampened. The horse's stomach may burst; therefore, immediate veterinary attention is required.

The most common signs of colic are as follows:

- Rolling
- Pawing at the ground
- Lying down more than usual
- Kicking at the abdomen
- Getting up and lying down repeatedly
- Standing stretch out
- Turning the head towards the flank repeatedly

If the symptoms are severe, call a vet immediately. Severe symptoms usually mean the horse is in great pain. If the symptoms are less severe, take some time to observe

the horse and consider what his feed habits have been over the past few days. If possible, take his temperature and pulse. Armed with this information, call the vet. While waiting for the vet to arrive, remove all food and make sure that the horse is in a safe place if he is rolling.

Not all horses show the severity of the pain they are experiencing; therefore, it is extremely important that all cases of potential colic are taken seriously.

The design of a horse's digestive system makes it particularly susceptible to colic. However, there are things that can be done to help prevent an occurrence:

- Allow as much turnout as possible.
- Follow a regular feeding schedule.
- Do not feed old or mouldy hay or grain.
- Do not feed or water a horse while it is cooling down.
- Make all changes to diet and exercise level slowly.
- Apply acupuncture and massage therapy. (Can also be good to help provide relief to the symptoms of colic before the vet arrives and in after care.)



INTENSIVE HANDS-ON ON-SITE TRAINING

If you want to learn animal massage quickly and thoroughly, then our Intensive Programme may be just what you are looking for. During a series of 3 jam-packed four day – very hands-on – sessions over three months, you learn everything you need to know to start your own business as an animal massage therapist.

Programme modules based on the on-site training presentations are provided at the start of each session. These act as the student study texts while completing the homework and online tests between sessions. Students have full access to the student forum and webinars for one full year. Detailed homework corrections are provided and may be discussed during the following session if desired. Students can expect to already start handling animals from the second day of the first session. Two case studies are completed during the third session and the student's details are added to the site immediately after successful completion of the final exam and awarding of the "Intensive Programme" certificate. Due to the level of personal attention and commitment required for this programme, participation is limited to 6 students per series.

All sessions are provided at Woofs & Hoofs in Helchteren. The next course starts in January 2011 (meets January 20-23, February 24-27 and March 24-27 2011). The price is €1,000.00.

Do not miss out! To enrol [click here](#).



ACUPRESSURE POINT

K1 – “Bubbling Spring point”

Located just behind the main pad of the hind foot on dogs and cats and between the heel bulbs on horses, K1 -the first point on the Kidney meridian - relieves fatigue, grounds the animal with the Earth’s energy and relaxes both the body and the mind. In reflexology, this point is also known as the Solar Plexus Point and is associated with the chakra of the same name.

Stimulating this point helps relieve stress and nervousness, aids relaxation, relaxes the bowels and promotes deep regular breathing. Since it restores a feeling of calm, it is beneficial for animals suffering from anxiety (separation or while at the veterinary office), depression, stress-related conditions and hyperactivity. It is also a good choice as a preventative measure for epilepsy as it helps calm and relax the entire nervous system. A further use for this point is to treat symptoms of colic and bloat while waiting for veterinary assistance.

The Kidney meridian is active between 5 and 7pm. You will therefore achieve the greatest benefits for your pet if you stimulate this point during this period. Work this point using a pumping motion of pressing into the point and releasing for 15-30 seconds. Don’t forget to do BOTH feet.

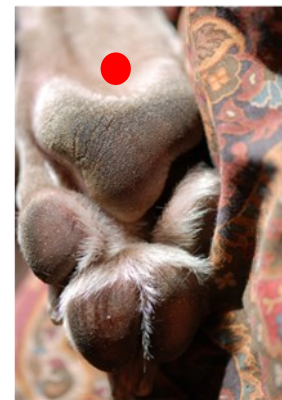
CAUTION!! This point should **NOT** be used on pregnant animals as it relaxes the perineum and can cause spontaneous abortion of the pups/kittens/foal.

Please remember that acupressure is a complementary therapy and not a replacement for proper veterinary care.

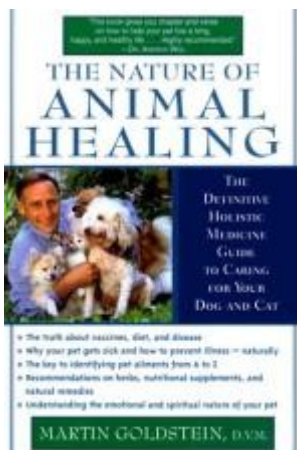
by Linda M. Gould - SAMP, LAMP



K1 - in the depression just behind the main pad or between the bulbs of the hind foot



RECOMMENDED READING



This month’s recommended book is *The Nature of Animal Healing: The Definitive Guide to Caring for Your Dog and Cat* by Dr. Martin Goldstein, DVM.

Dr. Goldstein is the founder of the Smith Ridge Veterinary Center in New York. After realising that life-threatening diseases were occurring in younger pets than in the past, he started to question his approach to veterinary medicine and study holistic approaches. In his book, he describes a method to healing that revolves around the immune system. He promotes a strategy of strengthening an animal’s immune system through diet, acupuncture and homeopathy. This approach allows the animal to heal itself. He describes how he has used this approach to treat medical problems.

Many may find his approach too radical; however, we think it is an interesting read that will make you think about animal health care and consider the benefits of holistic medicine.

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WOOFS & HOOFS ACTIVITIES CALENDAR

Wondering when your favourite workshop is planned at Woofs & Hoofs? Here’s our latest dates. Remember that participation is limited so register early by [clicking here](#).

2 April ‘11 - Massage for Pet Owners

28 May ‘11 - Reiki 1 for People and Pets

1 July ‘11 - Animal Communication - Beginner

2-3 July ‘11 - Animal Communication - Advanced

And don’t forget, we also offer programmes through our School of Animal Massage. You can choose from three options depending on your needs: Self-study, Combined Learning, and the Intensive Programme.

Self-study:

Start Anytime

Combined Learning:

Module Pack 1 - Starts 13 December

Intensive Programme:

Hands-On On-Site Training - Begins 2 June



COMMENTS? IDEAS?

Natural Healing for Pets is created by Triangle Ink Limited. Their editor, Renee McClellan, is interested if you have any comments about this issue or any ideas for future newsletters. Please send comments and ideas to comments@triangleinkediting.co.uk.





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WE'RE ON THE WEB !
WWW.WOOFSANDHOOFS.BE

HELPING YOUR PET
TO FEEL GOOD NATURALLY

At Woofs & Hoofs Animal Massage, our mission is to help pets live long, happy, comfortable lives through natural healing modalities, appropriate training methods, understanding of the physical and emotional connection and needs of animals and through owner training and enlightenment.

We offer in-home massage and behaviour consultations as well as owner training and workshops in massage and behaviour at private homes, dog schools, stables or at our practice in Helchteren.

We also provide professional level courses for those looking for a new career in animal health care and veterinary support.

Our current calendar of events, workshops, lectures and other associated activities can be found by clicking on the 'calendar' tab on our website www.woofsandhoofs.be

For more information regarding our mission statement, methods and services or to schedule a workshop in your area, please contact Linda via e-mail at linda@woofsandhoofs.be.

CHEESY HEART DOG COOKIES

This issue's recipe comes from Healthy Recipes for Pets (www.healthyrecipesforpets.com). Your dog will be pleased with this cheesy Valentine's Day treat!

Ingredients:

2 cups All-Purpose flour -- un-sifted
1 1/4 cups cheddar cheese -- shredded
1/2 cup Vegetable oil
4 tablespoons Water -- (4 to 5)

Preparation & Cooking

Combine everything except the water. Whisk the ingredients in a food processor until the mixture reaches the consistency of cornmeal. Then, add the water until the mixture forms a ball. Roll it into 1/2" thickness and cut into heart shapes. Bake on ungreased cookie sheets approximately 10 minutes at 200 degrees C. Cool and store in a refrigerator.

Makes: 3 dozen



RUB THE RIGHT WAY: MASSAGE TECHNIQUES FOR YOUR PET

 by Linda M. Gould - SAMP, LAMP

Hard working necks and shoulders deserve a good rub! Four-legged animals normally carry about 60% of their weight on their front limbs. This allows them to produce quick spurts of energy with the hind leg without the need to first shift their weight forward before engaging the hind limbs. You can imagine the advantage this speed would offer to predators like wolves and lions when deciding to chase down their prey - or to prey animals, like horses and antelope, to respond to the attack!!

But look closely at the attachment of the front limbs and you will notice that there is no bony "joint" holding the limb to the body. Unlike in the human body, the scapula, or shoulder blade, of a 4-legged animal is attached to the side of the body. It is held in place by muscular attachments only. And those muscles are holding a minimum of 60% of the animal's weight !? Talk about the potential for tired muscles!

Give these well-deserving muscles some tender loving care by making circular movements using your fingertips to massage the muscles surrounding the scapula. Using the diagram at the right as a guide, feel around a bit until you find the edge of the scapula. It is usually easier to find the front or top edge of the scapula than it is to find the rear

edge. Once you have located the bony structure, begin massaging in either direction, but be sure to go around the entire scapula. On some well muscled dogs or horses, you may "lose" the back side of the scapula as it becomes covered in strong, supporting muscles. If this happens, just estimate where you think the edge would be and continue massaging. Your pet may adjust the leg for you to give you better access to the area. This is a good sign, that they are enjoying your touch.

Use slow, medium depth strokes to release any tension in the area. If you feel what seem like small peas in the muscles, work these a little longer as these are knots created by trapped lactic acid.

When you finish, stroke/pet the area for another 2-3 minutes to complete the massage and remove the toxins released by the massage. Also be sure to provide fresh water to your pet and don't be surprised if they relax further with a nap!

