

Natural Health (Holism)
ALTERNATIVE VETERINARY MEDICINE CENTRE

Article WS106/07

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NATURAL HEALTH (HOLISM)

It is true that more and more people are turning to natural medicine for their own ills. This is part of an increased awareness, resulting from the information age. It is part of the modern necessary reversion to holistic thinking. It is also a result of disillusionment with what is currently offered by conventional medicine, whether on the National Health or private. Natural medicine offers something positive, even in cases of serious disease. The body is asked to right its own wrongs, with the help, guidance and gentle stimulus provided by [Homeopathy](#), [Acupuncture](#), [Herbs](#) (Herbal Medicine), [Flower Essences](#), [Aromatherapy](#), [Chiropractic](#) (Chiropractic Manipulation), Reflexology and other therapies.

There is a great emphasis on [diet](#), too, which is the foundation of all good medicine. Hippocrates is credited with saying “*Let food be thy medicine and medicine thy food*”. We are beginning again to realise the fundamental importance of this very holistic concept. Healthy foods are now acceptable, rather than cranky. Organic food is proliferating in the market place. As demand increases, so does availability. As availability improves, so awareness increases and demand is stimulated. Whatever the authorities may say about the safety of chemically-grown food, the buying public knows the difference and knows the importance of sustainable organic farming to the world’s environment and to our ecology. The spiral is ever upward.

All of this common sense applies just as well to our pets as to ourselves. It stands to reason that prevention is better than cure. To this end a healthy, natural, fresh and varied diet is the obvious choice. Food items must be compatible with each species’ evolutionary needs but the principle applies across the board. Convenience food is not as desirable, as safe or as nutritious as wholesome fresh food. Should illness occur in our pets, natural medicines that work **with** the body and via its natural mechanisms are clearly a very attractive and increasingly available option. Veterinary surgeons are enrolling on training

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courses for Homeopathy and for Acupuncture at unprecedented rates. Practices are employing vets with natural medicine training in increasing numbers. Some of this is market driven, some of it is a result of seeing a clear need for alternatives to the conventional drug approach to illness.

The good news is that it is becoming increasingly likely that you can find a vet with a reasonable level of expertise in one or other or a combination of natural therapies, well within reach of your home. Your own veterinary surgeon may even be studying natural therapies. Should your pet be needing natural therapy for a complex problem, your own veterinary surgeon can refer you to one of the increasing number of vets who have not only undergone training but who have obtained a qualification in one or other therapy.

Holism explains nature's way of creating 'systems'. A system is different from the sum of its components. Within any system, each component acts on and reacts to each other component. No part functions independently. Within each system there is another system, again comprised of interacting components. The process applies from the largest system of the cosmos down to the smallest atom. This is like the flea story by Jonathan Swift, parodied by Augustus de Morgan (1806-1871): "*Great fleas have lesser fleas upon their backs to bite 'em. And little fleas have lesser fleas and so ad infinitum*". Not only does every component of a system interact with its fellows, so does each system interact with every other system. Nothing and no one has an independent existence. This explains how industrial pollution in Europe can affect the rainforests and vice versa; deforestation in the tropics affects us in the UK.

Within us and within our pets, the same principle applies. No organ or body system is independent of the others. Our minds affect our bodies, our bodies affect our minds. Our kidneys affect our bones and heart (and all other organs) and are in turn affected by those organs. Our environment affects us and we affect our environment. Our own health or disease or those of our animals can not be usefully considered without looking at the way we or they eat and live and without studying the patient's environment and lifestyle.

Christopher Day (holistic vet) – September 2000

See also: <http://www.holisticvetmed.co.uk>

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