



The Autumn Report

Healthy tips for healthy dogs!

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Recently, Global TV came to film me at work for a spot on the 6 o'clock news, which should air on April 6. It was a great pleasure for me, so I would like to share some highlights of the interview with you.

The day Global came, I was working on Charlie, a sweet two-year-old German Shepherd Dog with a history of hind leg paralysis. Euthanasia had been presented as his best option ... but he started recovering to a degree. When I first saw him, he was walking, but dragging bleeding toes. I treated Charlie with aquapuncture (injections on acupuncture points), and in this case it included homeopathic preparations. The owner reported that Charlie got worse for two days, then rapidly got markedly better than before the treatment. It was Charlie's second treatment that Global filmed.

GTV: Why holistic therapy for pets?

Dr. D: Because it works! Often animals are brought in because the conventional approach has failed to give satisfactory results, or the drugs are causing undesirable side effects. People are deciding that they don't want to expose their pets to chemicals that are either toxic or have unknown effects. Animals generally respond very well to holistic medicine, and many pet owners now realize this. And, it's the green way to go. Natural remedies leave less of a carbon footprint.

GTV: What types of treatments do natural remedies encompass?

Dr. D: In my practice I use: Homeopathy, Herbs, Clinical Nutrition, Acupuncture, and lifestyle/dietary counseling. We also have an animal chiropractor.

GTV: How does it work?

Dr. D: By two avenues: First, by removing the obstacles to optimum health. And second, by stimulating and supporting the body's own healing powers.

GTV: Do you also recommend traditional veterinary care?

Dr. D: Yes, there is a place for traditional care. I refer animals for surgery, dental work and diagnostic tests. At our office, we do parasite testing and various blood tests, as well as vaccine titre testing. Also, we tailor a vaccination program based on the pet's history, immune status and exposure to disease agents.

GTV: What do most conventional vets think of holistic veterinary medicine?

Dr.D: Most are open minded about it, although they don't necessarily want to get into this field. Some refer patients to me. A few are still skeptical, but much less so than 25 years ago.

GTV: What types of pets/animals use the therapies?

Dr. D: In my practice it's now exclusively dogs and cats. In the past I practised holistic medicine on horses and farm animals. I have also used it on wild life.

GTV: How long have you been practising this?

Dr. D: Quite a while! I graduated from the Ontario Veterinary College in Guelph in 1977, started using nutritional supplements in 1978, then herbs followed in 1981, acupuncture and homeopathy in 1983. In 1989 I graduated from the Canadian College of Naturopathic Medicine.

GTV: What type of training should someone have to practise this?

Dr. D: There are several organizations, which offer certification courses in acupuncture, others in homeopathy (e.g. IVAS: International Veterinary Acupuncture Society, and AVH: Academy of Veterinary Homeopathy). The American Holistic Veterinary Medical Association offers courses, a journal and an annual conference.

There are a handful of practitioners like myself in North America who have both a veterinary degree and a naturopathic medicine degree.

GTV: How do the animals respond?

Dr. D: Animals generally respond quite well. Certain conditions respond more quickly and more completely than others. For example, rapid responses can be seen in digestive problems, ear infections, liver, thyroid and kidney problems.

Cancer patients, if presented soon enough, usually get a better quality of life and live longer than would be expected.

Some of the most challenging and rewarding cases are animals with seasonal skin allergies because there are many factors at play and it takes time for them to heal, and meanwhile the animals can be scratching themselves raw. The mainstream medical treatments for these animals are steroids and anti-histamines, which, of course, are not a cure, and in the case of steroids have nasty side effects.

GTV: How do your fees compare to those of a regular vet practice?

Dr.D: In the long run, it works out to about the same.

GTV: Is there anything else you think is important to add?

Dr. D: There is a place for both types of medicine. It makes sense to start with the gentle methods whenever possible. The greatest limitation of holistic medicine is not its success rate; it's the limited number of veterinarians who offer this service.

I hope you get a chance to watch the show.

Stay tuned for more answers to your canine health questions in the next *Autumn Report* coming soon. This letter may be reproduced if referenced.

Please note: It can be important to consult a vet to make sure your dog is healthy before beginning any home made medication or diets. All dogs are different. The purpose of this newsletter is to offer general advice. It is not a substitute for proper veterinary care. The author and Canadian Dog Group Limited are not responsible for the accuracy or implications of any of the recommendations contained in this newsletter.

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Thank you very, very much!