Acupuncture... An Age-old Treatment
By Emily Bemrose, DVM

I have been offering acupuncture for my patients since 2013. Acupuncture is a technique that involves placing needles over specific points to heal disease processes. From the Eastern Medicine perspective, it is believed that Qi (pronounced “chee”) is the energy and life force in the body. Qi is believed to run in certain meridians or tracks along the body, and it is these tracks that the acupuncture points follow. Diseases are obstructions in the flow of Qi. We use acupuncture to open up the flow of Qi, alleviating stagnation, and treating the disease that has occurred as a result.

From a Western Medicine perspective, research has shown that the location of specific acupuncture points are tied to nerves and blood supply of the musculature or organs they are related to. Western medicine has proven that acupuncture stimulates blood flow, nerves, and increases the delivery and production of the body’s natural healing and pain management products. These things in combination help to heal the body, drawing away inflammation, and bringing healing properties in to the sites the needles are placed.

While acupuncture is useful for a myriad of diseases, I have had the most success using it to manage pain from various orthopedic conditions, inflammatory conditions such as stomatitis, allergies, and dermatitis, urinary incontinence, and some neurologic diseases such as seizures, paresis or paralysis.

When you schedule an acupuncture visit for your pet you can expect the following:

The initial assessment will involve a general examination with special focus paid to your animal’s tongue color, pulse strength and quality, and daily behaviors at home. These questions and details of the exam give me information about the flow of Qi in your pet’s body and how it may be affecting him or her. From there I will use an individualized technique involving palpating along all of the meridians of the body and determining which points may be most beneficial to your pet.

While a few of the needle points can hurt on initial placement, acupuncture does not tend to be overtly painful and most of my patients tolerate it really well. The one drawback can be dogs who want to shake after the needles are placed, but we find ways to try to work around this!
Once the needles are placed, you get to hang out with your pet as they rest, usually about 20 minutes. Often times, due to the endorphins released by the needles, your pet will fall asleep during this time.

The whole process from start to finish is about an hour long. It depends on the disease we are treating, but often time results are seen after the first visit, although a few treatments or long term treatments can be needed to make longer lasting corrections.

Announcement

February is dental month! We will be offering 10% off routine dental cleanings, including full mouth radiographs!* Book your appointment now!

- Pets must have a current annual exam
- Bloodwork is required prior to anesthesia and can be performed the same day
- Let us know if your pet needs anxiety medication prior to their appointment!


*Discount does not include extractions, sealants, or mass removals.

Animal Community Talks

Sunday, March 19th at 2pm in the Dove Lewis Community Room

**Regenerative Medicine:**
A New Frontier in Joint Pain

"Regenerative Medicine" encompasses modalities used to help the body heal itself, including Class IV therapy laser, platelet rich plasma injections, and stem cell treatment.

KristyAnn Brock, DVM CCRP and ACT Alumni, Rosie Gilbert, DVM, of Viking Veterinary Care will review the medicine behind these options, and present case studies of their patients.

Here’s the link: [http://animalcommunity.org/index.php/upcoming-events/81-regenerative-medicine](http://animalcommunity.org/index.php/upcoming-events/81-regenerative-medicine)

In case you missed it, Dr. Gilbert’s presentation to the Animal Community Talks last year “Introduction to Fear-Free Veterinary Visits” is available to view online. Check out the video and the synopsis at [http://animalcommunity.org/index.php/previous-events/46-fear-free-vet-](http://animalcommunity.org/index.php/previous-events/46-fear-free-vet-).
Take Advantage of our Home Delivery Program!

Did you know our veterinary hospital offers the convenience of Home Delivery?

Our Home Delivery program provides affordable, quality medications, coupled with convenient AutoShip programs so your pet’s medications are delivered to your home, on time, just when you need it.

Shop online and browse our selection of safe, authentic products that include:

- Prescription Drugs
- Chronic Medications
- Flea, Tick, & Heartworm Preventatives
- Nutrition Products
- Specialty Pharmaceuticals

Three simple ways to enroll:
1) Online
2) Over the phone
3) Come in and let us set up your orders in the clinic
Parvo in Cats?

The feline virus for distemper (also known as panleukopenia) is from the Parvovirus family. In fact, it is so similar to canine parvo, that they CAN be infected. We can actually use the canine parvo test to screen for distemper in cats.

There is no need to differentiate between canine and feline parvo viruses, as they have the same symptoms and are treated the same—with supportive care. If a cat received adequate (i.e. 2-3 FVRCP vaccines, depending on age) as a kitten, they likely have life-long immunity to feline distemper/panleukopenia. If the cat was/is immunocompromised in any way, it is a good idea to keep their FVRCP vaccine updated.

Parvo is everywhere in the environment. Some pets shed the virus without showing clinical signs, which means even indoor-only cats could be exposed any time people with pets visit their home. Our veterinarians at Viking Veterinary Care are happy to discuss your dog’s and cat’s risk factors with you to help you decide if vaccines need to be updated or if titer testing is an option.

Our longtime technician assistant, Katy, is transitioning out of the veterinary field. We are sad to see her go but she will fill-in occasionally so she can visit with her patients. We wish you all the best, Katy!
Old Dogs Can Learn New Tricks

By Emily Bemrose, DVM

Senior pets are my absolute favorite patients to see. They carry a sweet wisdom, knowing looks, and selective hearing. As your pets age, their medical care and regular vet visits become exceedingly important. If you think about it, if you miss one regular exam with your senior dog and cat citizen, it is the equivalent of a senior human citizen not seeing the doctor for close to 14 years!!

As your animal’s age increases so do the number of disease processes that can develop. On average we consider pets to be senior citizens after about the age of 6-9 years of age. This can vary a little based on cat versus dog, and big dog versus small dog.

For dogs common diseases that develop as they age include dental disease, arthritis, diabetes, liver and kidney disease, cancer and heart disease. Common clinical signs that may be red flags for illness developing in your dog can include lack of appetite, reluctance to do things such as jump in and out of the car, stiffness after exercise, drinking more, urinating more often, lethargy, coughing, or labored breathing.

For cats common diseases include many of the same diseases as mentioned for dogs, and some additional ones such as hyperthyroidism and gastrointestinal disorders. Cats are notorious for hiding their illnesses, which can make them go from seemingly fine to extremely ill in what seems like a very rapid period of time. Keep an eye on them for rapid weight loss, inappropriate use of the litterbox, producing larger urine volume, acting more hungry, vomiting and diarrhea, or lethargy.

Because these signs can start out subtle, routine exams before you realize there is a problem are so important! From there we can decide what diagnostics may be indicated, what treatments will be beneficial, and ensure our senior pets are as comfortable and healthy as possible during the golden years.

Dr. Kristy's newly adopted senior, Koda, enjoying the snow.