

Animals can find healers

If holistic approaches are good for people, why not for animals, too?

NEWTON FALLS — Many people who are truly devoted to healing through natural, holistic methods extend that devotion to the healing of their animals. Holistic veterinary practice is gaining great popularity. A web search turned up over 86,000 sites related to holistic veterinary practice, and in this area, we have several vets who are integrating alternative methods with traditional practice, according to the needs of their clients.

Dr. Luke Lukasko, of Newton Falls Animal Hospital, has been in practice since 1984. He became certified in acupuncture through the International Veterinary Acupuncture Society, and has seen the greatest results with this modality.

"There is a tremendous decrease in pain and stiffness. From the Chinese point of view, every disease is caused by imbalance, and when you correct that, the body can function better," says Dr. Lukasko. "Acupuncture became popular in America back in the '70s when Nixon went to China. He observed surgery being performed without anesthesia, using just acupuncture needles."

Detailed study

In 1998, both Dr. Lukasko and his wife Judy studied CranioSacral Ther-

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Therapy to be more appropriate. Dr. Hall is also certified in NAET, and has been successful in treating grass allergies, inflammatory bowel disease and food allergies, and other allergy problems. "I add about five new holistic clients a month, just through word of mouth," says Dr. Hall.

Dr. Cynthia Maro, of Ellwood Animal Hospital, is perhaps the holistic veterinary pioneer in the area, having been in practice for 18 years, and involved with holistics for 17. She was exposed to acupuncture as a student, using it as a diagnostic tool and is now a practitioner of all the above modalities, plus numerous others. "With chronic illness, conventional medicine can take its toll on the body," says Dr. Maro. "Alternative therapies works better."

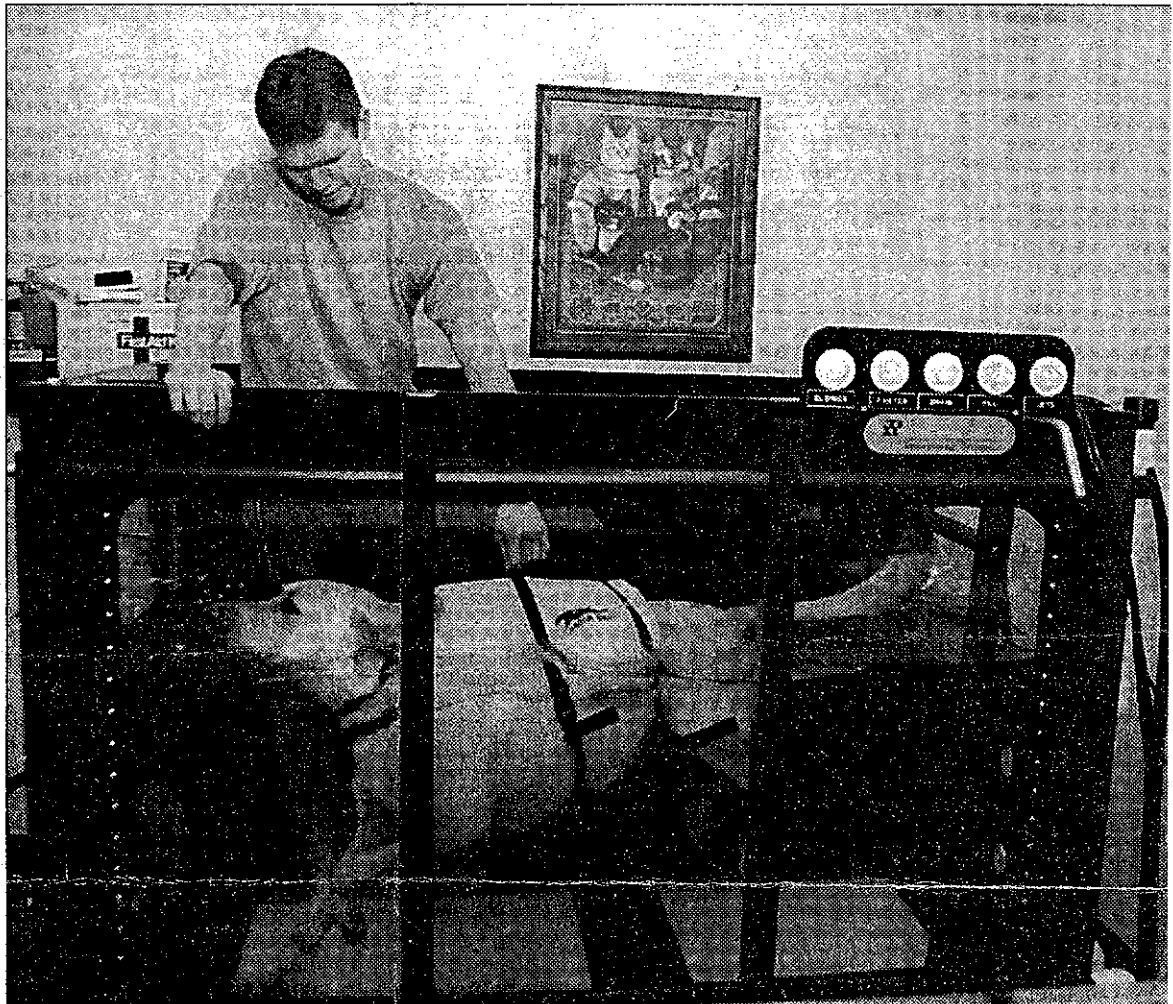
Variety of uses

One of the more unusual is called gold bead therapy. "Acupuncture needles made of different metals, such as brass, gold, and silver, are used for different effects," says Dr. Maro. "In gold bead therapy, beads implanted very precisely through a 1/16 inch wide needle while the animal is under anesthesia. This is especially helpful in hip dysplasia and arthritis. Arthritis is a reactive process which creates bony deposits, muscle atrophy, and restriction of movement. The beads decrease new bone formation and keep the joints moving."

She also says that 65-70 per cent of her clients benefit from holistic methods such as acupuncture for internal problems, not just for rehab, although her practice does include an extensive rehab program.

Dr. Maro finds the use of essential oils effective during massage and myofascial therapy. The clinic stocks about 50 different oils, and one particular canine technique called "rain-drop" therapy uses a combination of 9, including a number of herbs like peppermint, wintergreen, basil, and cypress. After massage, the dog is then covered with a heated blanket, followed by some stretching.

One unique feature Dr. Maro uses is the underwater treadmill, called Aquapaws. "To the best of my knowledge, it is only the second one in



MANY OPTIONS: Everything from acupuncture to specialized physical therapy can be used to improve a pet's health when a holistic approach is used.

Pennsylvania," says practice manager Jim Focareta. "We have a 350 gallon water tank. The animal begins walking on the treadmill, wearing a floatation device as heated water is pumped into the treadmill tank. The idea is for it to continue treading without the treadmill as more water is added. Sometimes it will panic, then the water is lowered again. This is very popular for dogs with arthritis, and for show dogs."

Dr. Maro also does numerous other holistic therapies, including laser therapy, therapeutic ultrasound, and electrostimulation. "Many clients seek out Dr. Maro because they choose not to use drugs themselves," says Focareta. "But others come to us with aged pets because they have exhausted all other options."

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Veterinary Chiropractics:
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www.avcadoctors.com
NAET for Animals: www.vetnaet.com/articles

International Veterinary Acupuncture Society: www.ivas.org

Various:
www.natural-animal-health.co.uk
<http://holistic-vet.com>
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