

Veterinary Acupuncture

As the performance of and demands on horses have increased over the past two decades, so has the search for therapies to assist in healing and improve performance. Acupuncture was developed 3500 years ago in ancient China, researched in modern day medicine and has been used in veterinary practice to treat various acute and chronic conditions. The insertion of small, flexible needles into specific points and depths on the body cause a healing effect. The American Veterinary Medical Association considers acupuncture a valid modality and an integral part of the practice of veterinary medicine and surgery.

Frequently Asked Questions:

How does acupuncture work?

A healthy body is said to be in 'balance' or 'homeostasis.' Acupuncture is a key therapy used to bring the body back into a homeostatic state after an injury or illness and is known to affect all major physiologic systems. It works primarily through the central nervous system affecting the musculoskeletal, cardiovascular and hormonal systems. It does more than relieve pain. Acupuncture increases circulation, causes a release of many neurochemicals, some of which are endorphins, the body's "natural pain-killing" hormones, relieves muscle spasms, stimulates nerves, and strengthens immune functions.

*What conditions respond to acupuncture?
Acupuncture is indicated for functional problems such as those that involve pain, non-infectious inflammation (such as arthritis and allergies), and paralysis. The following are some conditions which may be treated with acupuncture.*

- ❖ *Musculoskeletal problems*
 - ◇ *Back/muscle pain*
 - ◇ *Shortened stride*
 - ◇ *Lameness*
 - ◇ *Laminitis/Navicular*
 - ◇ *Tendon injury*
 - ◇ *Joint/arthritis pain*
- ❖ *Gastrointestinal dysfunction*
 - ◇ *Non-surgical colic*
 - ◇ *Diarrhea*
- ❖ *Respiratory disorders*
 - ◇ *Heaves*
 - ◇ *Nose bleeds*
- ❖ *Wound Healing*
 - ◇ *Decreased healing time*
 - ◇ *Decreased pain*
- ❖ *Reproductive problems*

Conditions that are decreasing the quality of life of your animal and not responding to traditional western medicine may respond to acupuncture!

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Is acupuncture painful?

Every horse has a unique personality and response to acupuncture. For most animals the insertion of acupuncture needles is virtually painless. There is occasionally a brief moment of sensitivity when the needle penetrates the skin. Once the needles are in place there should be no pain. Most horses require no restraint or sedation and become very relaxed during treatment due to the endorphin release. There are many ways of stimulating acupuncture points including needles, electro-acupuncture, aquapuncture (injecting a solution into a point), and moxibustion (heating the point).

How long do acupuncture treatments last and how often are they given?

The length and frequency of the treatment depends on the condition of the patient. Typically a patient is treated 1-2 times per week for 20-40 minutes. A positive response is usually observed after the first to third treatment. A simple acute problem, such as a strain/sprain may only require one treatment, while more chronic conditions may need 3-6 treatment to obtain maximum response. Treatments for chronic conditions can often be tapered off to 2-4 treatments per year.

How do I set up an appointment?

*Call Dr. Dusti Prentice
Certified Veterinary Acupuncturist
Southern Arizona Equine
House calls or office visits by appt.*

*Email dr.prentice@sazequine.com
(520) 678-5566*

It matters not whether medicine is old or new, so long as it brings about a cure.

It matters not whether theories are Eastern or Western, so long as they provide to be true.

- Dr. Jen-Hsou Lin