

What's what?

Integrative/complementary medicine

In veterinary medicine the term integrative refers to the treatment of the patient as a whole animal, rather than treating the disease or the symptoms alone. All aspects of the animal's wellbeing, including diet, lifestyle and emotional state, are considered in order to maintain the best possible quality of life. Integrated medicine embraces a diverse range of therapies including herbal medicine, acupuncture and other modalities such as physiotherapy and nutrition. All of these approaches are complementary to conventional medicine, not alternatives.

Herbal medicine

Herbal medicine is the treatment and prevention of disease using preparations of plant parts and extracts. The plants are prepared as teas, tablets or tinctures to be taken internally and as ointments, lotions or gels to be applied externally. Preparations of a single plant may be used for certain ailments. However, we usually formulate bespoke preparations that take into account the holistic needs of each individual patient.

While most pharmaceutical drugs are based on a single compound that targets a specific ailment, herbal medicines contain the diverse assortment of compounds that naturally occur in the plant leaves, seeds, flowers or roots. So herbal preparations often benefit several aspects of the patient's health at the same time and the holistic synergy between the many ingredients may have an overall effect greater than the sum of the individual parts.

Homeopathy

Homeopathic remedies are based on highly diluted solutions of specific molecules. Although some complementary practitioners may offer herbal medicine and homeopathy together, they are distinctly different medical disciplines.

Please note we do not offer homeopathy at Barrier Animal Care Clinic

Why Choose herbal medicine?

Herbal medicine has evolved over many years. However in the 20th century there was a decline in the use of herbs, particularly in industrialised countries, as new pharmaceuticals such as antibiotics and steroids were synthesised. As amazing as these developments have been, adverse reactions and the ongoing risk of side effects from pharmaceuticals, together with the proliferation of disease related to diet and lifestyle in developed countries, mean that many people are looking again at a more integrated approach of healthcare.

Herbal treatments may be particularly beneficial for conditions where the normal processes of the body are malfunctioning such as autoimmune, inflammatory and degenerative diseases. They can also help to ameliorate the side effects of some conventional treatments.

Case study: Echinacea

Native Americans used Echinacea as a painkiller for toothache and treatment of coughs and snake bites.

Echinacea has been proven to have immune modulating activity. It increases production of macrophages, neutrophils and lymphocytes. These play a vital role in the natural defence against bacteria, viruses and fungal infections. Echinacea is often used for treatment of upper respiratory infections.



Innovations

Some of the more recent innovations in natural medicine include the use of manuka honey and silver in wound dressings and copper door handles to fight hospital superbugs.

Acupuncture

Modern acupuncture has evolved from the ancient Chinese art of placing needles into special locations on the body. It can help to alleviate pain, increase recovery rate and improve resistance to disease. There are two main schools, Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) and the Western Scientific Approach (WSA). Both methods are used at Barrier. Acupuncture can be applied to treat a variety of chronic conditions, to complement conventional treatments, or when conventional medicine fails. For more information please have a look at our website or the ABVA website.

www.abva.co.uk



Prices (March 2010)

Initial herbal consultation	£45
Follow-up herbal consultation	£20
Bespoke herbal tinctures (1 month supply)	
Patient up to 10kg	£20
Patient 10 – 20 kg	£25
Patient 20 – 30 kg	£30
Patient 30+ kg	£35+
Initial Acupuncture session	£ 47
Acupuncture follow-up session	£ 35

To arrange an appointment please contact the clinic and ask for a consultation with our complementary medicine specialist.

Veerle Dejonckheere
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Complementary Medicine For Pets



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