

How Can Chinese Herbal Medicine Help My Pet?

WHAT IS CHINESE HERBAL MEDICINE?

Chinese herbal medicine is a holistic approach to healing. Along with acupuncture, it comprises a system of diagnosis and systemic treatment commonly known as Traditional Chinese Veterinary Medicine or TCVM.

Within the treatment system of TCVM, illness is seen as a disharmony between a pet and their environment and it seeks to restore that harmony for health. Traditionally, TCVM was seen as an extension of nutrition, with herbs being added to food to improve their effects on the body.

Today it has evolved into a treatment system of complex formulas of herbs with specific uses. The group of herbs in a formula complement each other and allow the formula to work with minimal side effects and in a way that supports the health and balance of the body.

WHAT TYPES OF PET ILLNESS CAN BE TREATED BY CHINESE HERBAL MEDICINE?

Chinese medicinal herbs are primarily used in dogs and cats for a variety of conditions. These may include, but are not limited to: IVDD (intervertebral disc disease), arthritis, kidney disease, gastrointestinal conditions such as inflammatory bowel disease, constipation, cystitis or bladder issues, vomiting and diarrhea, incontinence, liver problems, heart problems, anxiety, behavioral problems, asthma, bronchitis and other geriatric health complications.

TCVM herbs can also be used in support of cancer treatments, including chemotherapy.

Herbs prescribed by your veterinarian are sourced from reputable companies and are tested for contamination, to ensure the plant species are correct, and to confirm their purity.

HOW LONG WILL TREATMENT LAST?

Herbal treatments tend to be gentler than conventional medications and may take longer to see clear results. Depending on the problem for which treatment is prescribed, it may take a minimum of two weeks for improvements. Often a short course is all that is necessary for acute problems.

However, chronic conditions may require several months of treatment to restore balance and wellness to the body. Herbs are often combined with changes in diet and lifestyle as well as acupuncture to improve overall benefits. As your pet's condition improves or changes, different formulas may be added or discontinued.

CAN HERBS BE GIVEN WITH MY PET'S REGULAR MEDICATIONS?

Yes, herbs prescribed by a veterinarian can be used with conventional drugs.

ARE THERE ANY SIDE EFFECTS?

Properly chosen and sourced Chinese herbal medicines do not have "side effects." They do have *effects* and after starting a new herbal formula, if these effects persist, are unwanted or unhelpful (such as decreased appetite, soft stools, or mild nervousness), these new symptoms will guide your veterinarian to change the dosage or the formula itself.

The most common changes (although still not prevalent) include vomiting, diarrhea, or decrease in appetite. In any case, contact your veterinarian if you notice any change in your pet.