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Review Article

Animal Homeopathy: Well-being and Balance from Alternative Medicine

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Abstract: Animal homeopathy is a branch of alternative medicine that seeks to promote the physical and emotional well-being of animals through the use of highly diluted natural remedies. This therapeutic approach is based on the principle of "like cures like" and is applied to both pets and farm animals. This article explores how homeopathy can complement conventional veterinary medicine, offering gentle and personalized solutions for conditions such as allergies, anxiety, digestive problems, and immune imbalances. It also discusses case studies, benefits, limitations, and the growing interest among caregivers and professionals in holistic methods that respect the animal's nature.

Keywords: Homeopathy, Veterinary Medicine.

Introduction

Homeopathic medicine is a therapeutic method that emerged in Europe in the late 18th century, prior to significant scientific developments such as the introduction of the experimental method in pharmacology and physiology, the microbial, cellular, atomic, and evolutionary theories, and positivism. This method originated from the work and observations of the German physician Samuel C. Hahnemann (1755–1843). Without a doubt, the 1960s were clearly disruptive in more than one way. The sciences in general, and the social sciences in particular, were forced in various ways to review and redefine concepts that were considered untouched, one of which was the very concepts of health, illness, corporality, and social conditioning [1].

Currently, this medicine is widely accepted in developed countries, particularly in Germany, France, and Belgium. Homeopathy is accepted as a complementary medicine; however, it has detractors and proponents who dispute its recognition. There are studies that provide evidence of the effectiveness of homeopathic remedies. One of the studies in favor of homeopathy was published in 1991 in the British Medical Journal; of 107 controlled trials, 81 showed homeopathic therapy to be effective, 24 found it to be ineffective, and two were inconclusive. Vannier (1991) considered knowledge of the patient's "temperament" and "particular reactions" more relevant than the specific etiology [1]. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), in a publication related to the first global strategy on traditional medicine, they noted that in many developed countries, certain complementary medicines (CAM) are very popular. Various governmental and non-governmental reports indicate that the percentage of the population that has used CAM is 46% in Australia, 49% in France, and 70% in Canada. Surveys of 610 Swiss physicians showed that 46% had used some form of CAM, primarily homeopathy and acupuncture [2].

The WHO is particularly interested in supporting the development of these practices, encouraging the appropriate, safe, and effective use of traditional and complementary medicine. Worldwide, homeopathy has had a significant impact. It is said that in several countries, such as the United Kingdom, the English Royal Family has been the strongest advocate for homeopathy. There are five Homeopathic Hospitals operating within the National Health Service. Each year, up to 9.8% of the population uses homeopathic medicines or consults a homeopath. In Scotland, 12% of general practitioners use homeopathic medicines, and 49% of all general medical practices prescribe them [3].

The first publications in Cuba on homeopathy were published in 1824 by a French physician based in Havana named Julio Jacinto Le Riverend, who in 1852 began publishing a journal in Havana called *Medicina Homeopatica* [4,5].

Some of the products marketed and manufactured in Cuba based on this principle and registered in the Guide for the Prescription of Natural Products, available to all physicians in the country, are: *AliviHo-Asthma*, as an auxiliary treatment for asthma attacks, including coughing and difficulty breathing; *AliviHo-Cephalea*, suitable for the auxiliary analgesic treatment of acute pain of various kinds; *AliviHo-Conjunctivitis*, recommended as an auxiliary treatment for eye diseases related to conjunctivitis and its consequences; *AliviHo-Energía*, among others [6].

Homeopathy, etymologically derived from the Greek *omais* (equal) and *pathos* (feeling), is a scientifically based therapeutic method that seeks to cure people through the use of certain naturally occurring substances. These, called "remedies," are prescribed according to the law of similarity. It consists of administering substances to the patient in infinitesimal doses, which, in a healthy subject, in ponderable doses will produce the same symptoms as the disease being treated (paradoxical effect) [7].

It is based on three basic principles

1. Law of similarity (Hippocratic origin). Dr. Angel Marzetti, in his book "Homeopathy, Medicine of the Future," discusses the involuntary recognition of the existence of this principle, giving the example: "Ten or twenty grams of sodium sulfate produce watery diarrhea with little pain. Ten or twenty centigrams, or even a much smaller amount, cures a similar diarrhea" [7].
2. Individualization of the patient, not the disease. Based on pathogenesis, which is the set of disturbances that the substance in ponderable doses generates in the experimenter.
3. Infinitesimal doses or microdoses of the active substance. Through dilutions and dynamizations, the homeopathic remedy is obtained [7]. Its scientific method, based on empiricist thinking, goes from the general to the particular; that is, the symptoms that can be assessed in the disease are those "specific" to each patient, in particular. Furthermore, there is full acceptance of the notion of *physis* (the nature of being) with its curative effort, considering it spontaneous, self-determining, and with multiple defensive capacities [7].

It should be noted that treatment with homeopathy does not have adverse effects or contraindications, which is an advantage over other medicines. The attractiveness of homeopathy today for a large number of patients demonstrates that this therapeutic method is more than a historical phenomenon. Alternative treatments in veterinary medicine also focus on pain management. Among these, the use of cannabinoids has been shown to provide an adequate response to degenerative and traumatic processes in the central and peripheral nervous system by stimulating the migration of microglia and astrocytes in certain neuroinflammations [8].

Veterinary homeopathy, like human homeopathy, complements or replaces conventional homeopathy in the treatment of diseases affecting animals, whether domestic or livestock. Veterinary medicine has evolved toward more integrative approaches, where animal homeopathy is presented as a natural alternative for treating various physical and emotional conditions. Based on the principle that "like cures like," this discipline seeks to stimulate the body's self-healing capacity through highly diluted substances.

Clinical Applications The national professional associations of Canada, the United States, Australia, and New Zealand hold similar positions on CAVM. These positions include a demand for evidence-based rigor and the need to obtain the necessary training and qualifications for the approaches and techniques employed [9].

While these treatments and/or modalities are often part of veterinary postgraduate education, studies, and writing, they are generally considered alternatives or complementary to more universally accepted treatments, therapies, and modalities [10].

Homeopathy is used in domestic and production animals to treat conditions such as: Digestive disorders (diarrhea, vomiting, colic) Dermatological problems (allergies, eczema) Behavioral disorders (anxiety, aggression, fear) Chronic diseases (arthritis, mild kidney failure). Treatments are tailored to each patient based on their constitution, symptoms, and environment, allowing for personalized care that is less invasive than conventional medicine. Benefits and Limitations Benefits include: Absence of serious side effects; Compatibility with other treatments; Improved overall well-being. However, its effectiveness remains a subject of scientific debate. Clinical evidence is limited, and further research is required to validate its mechanisms of action.

Ethical and Professional Perspective Many integrative veterinarians consider homeopathy a complementary tool, especially in cases where conventional treatments do not offer satisfactory solutions. Furthermore, it responds to a growing demand from guardians seeking more natural and holistic options for their animals.

The most commonly used homeopathic remedies for each type of condition in domestic and production animals: Digestive disorders Nux vomica: useful for vomiting, indigestion, constipation, and diarrhea caused by overeating or stress [11]. Arsenicum album: indicated for watery diarrhea, vomiting with weakness, and food poisoning. China officinalis: for colic and fluid loss due to chronic diarrhea [11].

Dermatological Problems: Sulphur: widely used in cases of skin allergies, eczema, and persistent itching. Graphites: for cracked, moist, or thickly secreted skin. Psorinum: for animals with extremely sensitive skin or recurrent skin infections [11].

Chronic Diseases: Rhus toxicodendron: for arthritis and joint stiffness that improves with movement. Bryonia alba: joint pain that worsens with movement, useful for inflammation. Berberis vulgaris: indicated for mild kidney conditions, lower back pain, and altered urine [11].

For behavioral disorders in pets, technicians rely on symptom descriptions provided by pet owners, and these generally lack rich symptom descriptions and are very schematic. The most common disorders are anxiety and anguish, although these pathologies are not easily differentiated, and therefore distinguishing them requires careful attention. Animals do sometimes somatize symptoms that help us differentiate them and provide treatment. To achieve this, these pathologies must be distinguished in order to provide a precise etiological treatment [12].

Medications for both anxiety and anguish/fear problems should be given in a dynamic manner at 15-30 CH. Depending on the anxiety symptoms and etiology, the following medications should be used: a) when the animal loses weight without justification, we will give Argentum nitricum; b) we must observe whether or not it has changed its gait; if this happens at night and the animal is disoriented, Arsenicum album; c) if it is afraid to get down, we will give Borax; d) if the animals spend many hours alone, Bismuthum is the appropriate medication; if it does not go well, we will give Lycopodium; if the loneliness is accompanied by storms, Phosphorus; e) if it is furious and bites, Calcarea carbonica; f) if it presents unjustified tremors, Gelsemium; g) death of a loved one, Natrum muriaticum; h) in all cases where there are moans or howls, Pulsatilla; i) As a sedative, the medication to be applied is Passionflower, and as an etiological medication, Magnesia carbonica. These two medications can be given together with the appropriate symptomatic [12].

The choice of homeopathic remedy depends not only on the diagnosis but also on the animal's specific behavior, constitution, and symptoms. It should always be supervised by a veterinarian specializing in homeopathy. Although the concept of personalized medicine is not new, it requires further study in veterinary medicine, as it is still an emerging field with many knowledge gaps in practice. Only through greater research into the genomic variables that affect drug behavior in different canine breeds can real-world application in clinical practice be achieved.

Conclusion

Animal homeopathy represents an alternative way to promote physical and emotional balance in animals. Although it does not replace conventional medicine, it can be a valuable ally in a comprehensive approach to veterinary care.

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