

What is animal chiropractic?

Animal Chiropractic involves gentle motion of the spinal joints and extremities to restore proper biomechanics (normal anatomical motion) and importantly nervous system function in your pet. The nervous system controls everything and is the key to good health. So looking after its input is crucial. The nervous system also has to be healthy, this means that it must have a good nutrient and blood supply. Often a "stuck" joint or overactive muscle can compress the nerves and cause dis-ease. Chiropractors are the only professionals specially trained to reduce the stress on the nervous system and help your animals body to recover naturally. This means that Chiropractors are great at reducing pain, muscle spasms, and stiff joints.

Whether your pet is athletic or geriatric; Chiropractic care will help to reduce pain and promote optimal function of the musculoskeletal system. We work on all vertebrates; however, dogs, cats, horses, and cattle are the most common in my practice in Aberdeen & Aberdeenshire.

It is important to have your pet examined by a certified Animal Chiropractor regularly, even when there is nothing obvious wrong. Many people will tell me "he seems ok, but he's not himself, so I want you to check him over". Much like Chiropractic care for humans, your pets can benefit from Chiropractic adjustments to keep them healthy and well throughout their life, just like your dentist checks your teeth before you have pain/problems.

Pet owners often report seeing increased energy, reduced pain and wagging tails after just a few treatments.

The number and/or frequency are dependant on how long the animal has had it's issues.

How do I know that my animal needs to see veterinary chiropractic?

If your pet is suffering from conditions such as arthritis, hip dysplasia, lameness, gastrointestinal disease, chronic health issues, or back problems, he or she will benefit from our chiropractic services.

Professional Chiropractic manipulation can help ease pain, improve flexibility and mobility, and even enhance organ function.

Chiropractic therapy can also promote healing and improve range of motion in dogs/horses injured during everyday use, or can be used as a natural enhancement for performance before sporting events/competitions.

When should I call veterinary chiropractor?

When your pet just "isn't quite themselves", but doesn't show any signs of obvious lameness. Or when the vet has "done all they can". If the animal is older and you want him to feel as good as he can in his twilight years. Or if your animal just seems a little down or grumpy when handled or groomed - call Emma and she will sort him out, and get him back to health.

What is Chiropractic?

Chiropractic philosophy is based on the relationship of the spinal cord to the nervous system of the entire body. It primarily involves manipulation of the spinal cord but can also involve manipulation of the leg joints and skull, strengthening or stretching muscles, and post-manipulation exercise. Most animals show no signs of pain or discomfort during therapy, as the treatment works within the joint/ligament/muscles normal range. This makes Chiropractic care a very safe and natural form of treatment.

What do they do?

Chiropractors evaluate the function and structure of the spine, extremities, and skull. Based on their examination and the pet's clinical history, they then adjust any subluxations (vertebrae and joints that are out of alignment or abnormally restricted "stuck in one position and not fully moving in it's normal range). Emma prefers to use the phrase "stuck" or "fixed" as it is more anatomically accurate, but many Chiropractors use the word "subluxation" to mean the same thing. Fixations are manipulated back into a normal position by using a short "thrust" that is applied very specifically in the correct direction. Because of the expertise required for this technique, Chiropractic treatment can ONLY be performed by a qualified Doctor of Chiropractic (5 years medical training, or a Qualified Vet who has studied Animal Chiropractic and is registered with the IAVC). Please be aware that all Chiropractors are not the same. Make sure that your practitioner is fully trained and Gold standard by visiting www.ivca.de.

I can also use Veterinary Chiropractic in conjunction with traditional therapies such as Acupuncture and laser therapy, ultrasound therapy, or myofascial stretching massages to give your pet the best possible outcome. To discuss whether your pet is a candidate for chiropractic therapy, please call our clinic and set up an appointment with our experienced Veterinary Chiropractor.

Who uses Animal Chiropractor's and why?

Today, more people recognize that loving and caring for their pets extends beyond providing food and shelter. Quality pet healthcare is no longer limited to spaying and immunizations. With the emerging field of Animal Chiropractic, people are appreciating new ways for their pets to achieve and maintain optimal health.

How does it work?

Animal Chiropractic offers non-surgical, drug-free options for correcting bone, disc, and soft-tissue disorders related to improper spinal configuration and movement. When vertebrae become immovable through trauma, injury or degenerative wear and tear, the joints between them become jammed, often affecting the nerves that are in these congested areas. Because the nerves are the communication links from these joints to the brain and spinal cord, messages to the rest of the body become interrupted, leading to pain and loss of function. Animal Chiropractic focuses on the restoration and preservation of health by removing communication barriers and restoring normal function.

What happens on the first visit?

Once the pet owner has filled out a detailed intake form, a case history will be taken. This case history consists of obtaining information from the owner and information from prior veterinary services including radiographs and laboratory analysis. After the case history, a chiropractic examination will be performed on the animal. This examination includes gait analysis, posture analysis, orthopedic and neurological examination, muscle palpation, and extremity and vertebral joint palpation. Once the history and examination are complete the animal chiropractor will develop a treatment plan and make recommendations.

When should I seek a Chiropractors' advice or treatment?

This therapy is not limited to an injured or sick pet. Healthy and athletic animals are ideal candidates for chiropractic examination and care. Maintaining proper structural alignment permits optimal function of the muscles, nerves and tissues supporting the joints, resulting in improved movement, stance and flexibility. This alignment promotes increased agility, endurance, and overall performance. Broader benefits include superior immune function, healthier metabolism and a vibrant nervous system, facilitating your animal's natural ability to heal. Chiropractic can enhance the quality of your pet's life, ensuring active and healthy years.

More and more often veterinarians are utilizing animal chiropractors in their offices. They do so because animal chiropractors examine and treat areas of biomechanics and the functional nervous system that often go unnoticed by traditional veterinary care. By working in conjunction with veterinarians, animal chiropractors aid in restoring your pet's optimal health by treating the whole patient.

Animal Chiropractic is "NOT" intended to assume the primary health care responsibility of animals or replace veterinary medicine.

FOR VETS:- Chiropractic care for animals is one of the fastest growing and most valuable occupations available in animal healthcare today!

If you would like a free short seminar in your clinic please contact us today and we will be happy to give a presentation to your staff and partners.

How do you know if your horse needs chiropractic care?

There are a number of things to look for which could indicate that your horse has a problem that chiropractic care can help with.

Some of these include: decrease in level of performance, laziness

Loss of wind capacity

Problems or difficulty executing desired movements

Behavioural changes (refusals, bucking, head shy)

Head carriage or fighting the bit

Short striding, uneven strides, toe dragging, stumbling, forging and uneven shoe wear

Muscle imbalance, spasms or atrophy

Abnormal posture when standing, standing with hips uneven, choosing to stand on uneven ground, not squaring up when urinating, holding tail to one side

Gait problems, such as counter-canter, loss of collection, refusal to take a lead

Injuries from falls, training or other activities

Stressful situations such as poor conformation of the horse, various riding and training equipment, performance level and ability of the horse, shoeing Chronic disease conditions, multiple repetitive infections, weak immune system

How can an animal as large as a horse be adjusted ?

To answer this, it is important to remember that the entire horse isn't being adjusted, but rather a specific joint in the skeleton.

Traditionally horses would have lived on the open plains, constantly on the move, always grazing therefore always with their heads lowered. The main form of locomotion is the walk or trot, only using gallop as a method of fleeing predators, or in play. In domestication, humans have forced confinement in the stable or in the small paddock on to these horses, curtailing the ability to graze little and often, and only feeding them at mealtimes. We then expect these animals to perform a specific task, carry a rider, and perform to the best of their ability. All these factors reduce the desired optimal performance that we require from our animals. Due to this altered life style, we have found numerous reasons for injuries which come under two headings: Macrotrauma and Microtrauma.

Macrotrauma is the build up of little disturbances throughout the body. Examples are riding out on a road with a camber, poor foot balance, saddle fit, unbalanced rider, working on hard surfaces, continual circling, uneven bedding, large slope in the stable floor, poor conformation, and such like. These continuous repetitive mini strains will eventually cause the subluxations and fixations throughout the body that the chiropractor can find and correct.

Microtrauma is construed as the major trauma that can affect a horse, such as a trailer accident, slips, falls, getting cast in the stable, soft tissue

injuries to limbs like ligament or tendon strains will influence the system significantly. This is an example of how the system can be affected. In practice, back problems, leg injuries and muscle damage are often inter-related. An example of this might be an acute lower limb injury causing the horse to alter his gait and carry the affected leg abnormally.

The abnormal weight bearing and altered gait can subsequently overwork or injure associated back muscles.

Back injuries can result in increased forces to the joints, resulting in lameness, or gait alterations in the feet and legs, as the animal tries to protect its sore back.

Unless the primary cause of the back pain is identified and treated, most horses will have recurring back pain when returned to work after a period of medication and or rest.