The Vital Force
Part 2: Cure, Palliation and Suppression

The vital force is an energetic component in all living organisms that orchestrates all life functions, including growth, maintenance and repair. It is central to homeopathy and many other healing systems. Disease is a disturbance or mistunement of the vital force, which will attempt to expel disease from the body and restore health. The full return to health, or cure, is always the goal in homeopathy but it’s important to recognize just what cure is, as well as its imitators, palliation and suppression.

By Ronna Kabler DVM
Cure

“The physician’s highest and only calling is to make the sick healthy, to cure as it is called... The highest ideal of cure is the rapid, gentle and permanent restoration of health; that is, the lifting and annihilation of the disease in its entire extent in the shortest, most reliable, and least disadvantageous way, according to clearly realizable principles.”

Samuel Hahnemann, Organon of the Medical Art

Being cured means that health has been restored on all levels - physically, mentally and emotionally. The cured dog is not only free from symptoms, but he feels great and has the energy to live his life the way it was intended.

Cure can often be achieved with homeopathy, but what does a homeopathic cure look like?

When the remedy that is most similar to the disease is given, in the right frequency and right dose, you might see a temporary aggravation (the symptoms get worse), followed by the animal starting to look and feel better, and finally a gradual decrease in the intensity of the symptoms.

You might also see a return of older, longstanding symptoms, which is transient and resolves on its own.

Ultimately, the animal will be in a good state of health for an extended time and sometimes, permanently after treatment. This is the ideal and this is cure – or as close as you can get.

Cure in homeopathic terms is in marked contrast to what occurs in allopathic or conventional medicine. Conventional medicine is a system of medicine in which dissimilar medications and treatments (such as surgery) are used to treat disease, whereas homeopathy treats with similars.

We’re all familiar with the conventional pharmaceutical armament of the antis: antibiotics, anti-inflammatories, antifungals, antidepressants, immunosuppressive drugs, etc. These medications all suppress or palliate the symptoms of the disease, but do nothing to cure the disease itself.

Using dissimilar medications will temporarily displace or expel the disease symptoms, but won’t eliminate the disease. The disease that has the vital force under siege will ultimately resurface - and with more intense or more serious symptoms.

Palliation

Palliation is the temporary relief of symptoms with continuous treatment and without cure. Once the treatment is stopped, the symptoms return - often with more intensity than before. As a result of palliation, higher or more frequent doses of medicine will be needed when the symptoms return.

NSAIDS or non-steroidal anti-inflammatory medications are a great example of palliation. These are commonly used in conventional medicine to control arthritis pain. Similarly, insulin injections are also used in conventional medicine to control the symptoms of diabetes. But both of these drugs only palliate the symptoms of the disease. They are different from cure as they do nothing to change the disease itself.

Sometimes however, even in homeopathy, palliation is the best that can be done to help ease suffering. An example of this would be the use of homeopathic remedies to ease the pain and symptoms of cancer.

Suppression

“A forcible concealment or masking of perceptible manifestations of a disease condition without the cure of the disease.” Hahnemann

Suppression occurs when medicine or surgery results in the disappearance of a symptom or group of symptoms for a long time or permanently - but without cure and restoration of health.

This can happen with just one treatment or it can occur with continuous or prolonged treatment. Either way, suppression results in a disease that is still present and will ultimately manifest itself in a more serious way over time.

The phenomenon of suppression of symptoms has been known for centuries, yet conventional or modern medicine seems to deny its existence. As an example, suppression of eczema often leads to asthma, epileptic seizures and worse.

If the vital force is strong, it can often resist suppression, up to a point. But more often than not, the symptoms will return and you’ll find yourself back at the vet’s office for more suppressive medications. Eventually, long term suppressive treatments do take their toll on the vital force. All too often, chronic suppression ends in life threatening symptoms and tissue changes such as cancer. It can even result in the derangement of mental functions.

Once you are able to recognize suppression, it becomes obvious and you can often pinpoint the worsening of symptoms to a timeframe when suppressive treatments were given to your animal. Writing out a timeline of your pet’s medical history will often clearly illustrate this!

Cases

It was the realization of the harm that conventional medicine is inflicting upon us and our animals that caused me to leave conventional veterinary medicine and pursue homeopathy.

My own dog Genevieve was my inspiration. I’d like to use her case as an example of the folly of suppressive treatments and of the power of homeopathy to restore health.

The second case I’ll discuss, Jasper, also clearly illustrates the tragic effects of suppressive allopathic treatments and the relief that homeopathy gave to this beautiful creature.

Genevieve

Genevieve came to me in 2001, a mischievous, adorable eight week old Petit Basset Griffon Vendeen from a very reputable breeder. At the time of her arrival I was still practicing conventional veterinary medicine.

Genevieve had her first combination vaccine at six weeks of age and was under treatment for coccidia. She also had an ear infection. Looking back now, I clearly see that it was no coincidence that these two issues suddenly appeared while she was being vaccinated every few weeks, but I didn’t realize this at the time.

I treated her with a standard conventional ear medication and dutifully gave her a second distemper combination vaccination during
**Genevieve’s Timeline**

07/30/01  Genevieve is born
09/14/01  First distemper combo shot
09/27/01  Brought home, on Albon for coccidia
09/29/01  Ear “infection” – treated with Tresaderm
10/03/01  Second distemper combo (DA2PP-corona)
10/30/01  Third DA2PPC with lepto and Intratrac II
11/21/01  Rabies vaccination
11/27/01  Fourth DA2PPC and lepto
12/04/01  Cystitis – treated with Clavamox

3/27/02  “Drop Tail” Treated with NSAIDs
06/13/02  Histiocytoma (benign tumor) on left ear margin – no treatment
06/25/02  Poor appetite; fluid in uterus on ultrasound
07/05/02  Conjunctivitis left eye – treated with Mycitracin and ocular ointment
08/31/02  Anal sac cellulitis, left side – treated with Cefalexin and NSAIDs
09/02/02  Baytril because no improvement
11/19/02  Three year rabies vaccination
12/10/02  DA2PP vaccination
12/18/02  Lepto vaccination
01/21/03  Vomiting and diarrhea, weakness, inappetence – treated with Cimetadine, Reglan and IV fluids
01/22/03  Cystitis – treated with Baytril for 2 weeks
02/11/03  Cystitis not resolved – continued antibiotic treatment
07/13/03  Anal sac cellulitis – treated with Baytril and NSAIDS

Always sick after going to dog shows
04/05/04  Fever, inappetence and shifting leg lameness – Lyme positive – treated with Doxycycline – no improvement
04/08/04  Full work up by Internist. Diagnosis polyarthritis - given shot of steroids and continued on Doxycycline for one month – symptoms resolved in 24 hours after steroid injection
05/23/04  Recurrence of symptoms only much worse – walking as if on egg shells, suspected immune-mediated meningitis/vasculitis (IMMV)
06/03/04  Lumbosacral tap, CSF analysis confirmed IMMV
Treated with prednisone for four months
10/10/04  Recurrence of IMMV after start of estrus – treated with prednisone for four months
02/23/05  Spay – prolonged recovery over the next few days
03/01/05  Recurrence of IMMV – treated with homeopathic remedy *Belladonna 6C*
Symptoms resolved in ½ hour

the treatment period. The ear infection disappeared (an example of suppression).

During her first two years of life, Genevieve was bombarded with one illness after another.

These illnesses included cystitis, skin tumors, recurring anal sac abscesses and severe digestive upsets. Most were treated with conventional medications (even more suppression).

As time went on, her symptoms became more profound as she got sicker and sicker from the suppressive effects of the medications. Every time she went to a dog show, she developed increasingly severe vomiting and diarrhea to the point she had to be treated with intravenous fluids and medications.

One day she developed Lyme-like symptoms and this time around they weren't suppressed with antibiotics. She was given a thorough workup by an internist and Genevieve was diagnosed with Immune-Mediated Arthropathy and given a shot of steroids (without my permission). Genevieve's symptoms disappeared within twelve hours - only to return a month later with a vengeance.

After more intensive diagnostics, this time Genevieve was diagnosed with Immune-Mediated Meningitis/Vasculitis (IMMV). Sadly, this syndrome is considered to be an inherited disease in this breed, BUT is usually seen in puppies and treated (suppressed) with Prednisone. It often shows up after a vaccination - imagine that!

The symptoms Genevieve suffered with began with vomiting episodes, then the development of high fever, decreased appetite, thirstlessness, pain everywhere, crying out when touched, loss of voice, walking as if on eggshells and walking hunched over. She looked like she was 100 years old.

Over the next year, Genevieve was on high doses of Prednisone for up to four months at a time (more suppression). Her symptoms of fever and severe pain all over her body disappeared, but even off the steroids, she was lethargic, depressed and flat. She was not enjoying her life.

I decided to spay her because going into heat would cause a relapse. At the same time, I consulted with a veterinary homeopath, who recommended a remedy should her symptoms recur. Naturally, Genevieve had a prolonged and difficult recovery after her spay surgery. On day six, she suffered a relapse of her IMMV.

I gave Genevieve two doses of *Belladonna 6C*, as prescribed by Dr Jeff, her new homeopathic vet. Within 30 minutes, she was up, wagging her tail and running to the door to greet my daughter coming home from school! That was the start of our homeopathic journey (and a curative response)!

I’ve included the first half of Genevieve’s timeline on the left because it clearly illustrates the progression of her disease. I encourage you to write out a timeline for each of your animals. It’s very helpful to us homeopaths.
and it might reveal a few things about how illness often follows conventional treatment and vaccination.

Genevieve’s case is a classic example of suppression of superficial symptoms which led to much deeper and more severe illness – at the level of the meninges of the brain and the whole vascular system! In the next issue I’ll continue the story of Genevieve’s amazing restoration to health with homeopathy.

JASPER

Jasper was an eight year old neutered male Rhodesian Ridgeback. I first saw him in May of 2010 because of his two month loss of appetite. His history included chronic skin problems, food allergies and digestive issues. Of course, Jasper was treated with prescription diets and suppressive topical treatments prior to coming to me.

In July 2009, ten months prior to my meeting Jasper, he developed a mucous nasal discharge that was treated with antibiotics. The discharge cleared up temporarily, but returned fairly quickly (palliation). On September 16, 2009, Jasper was given a rabies vaccination and five days later, he was anesthetized for a dental cleaning and work up to for the chronic nasal discharge. He was then put on another antibiotic.

On September 26, Jasper had to be rushed to an emergency hospital for an intractable nosebleed! He was sedated to control the bleeding but this was followed by two more visits where he was put under general anesthesia for additional work ups and treatment. Jasper was given the diagnosis of nasal aspergillosis and treated with a nasal infusion of a potent antifungal and oral antibiotic. All his nasal symptoms disappeared (suppression).

In March of 2010, Jasper lost his appetite and became lethargic. He ultimately responded well to the homeopathic remedy I prescribed for him, *Calcarea carbonica*, and regained his energy and appetite for over a year.

Even though I made it very clear to both his guardians and his primary veterinarian that he should *never* receive another vaccine, the vet went ahead and gave Jasper a kennel cough vaccine in January of 2011. By March, he started to show signs of lethargy and inapetence again, but luckily he responded to his remedy.

In June 2011, Jasper was diagnosed with lymphoma. Homeopathy could not stop the deadly march of chronic disease ignited by suppressive allopathic treatments and questionable vaccinations. Also, sadly, nine years old is considered elderly for this breed.

It’s documented that nasal aspergillosis has been cured with homeopathy. Obviously, in a life threatening emergency situation, you shouldn’t hesitate to do what is necessary to help your dog. But if your dog should become ill, please think very carefully about how you should pursue treatment. Don’t ever vaccinate any animal who is showing any symptoms out of the ordinary. You should also understand that any treatment modality can be suppressive, even homeopathy, unless the classical principles of homeopathy are followed.

Ronna Kabler graduated from Tufts University School of Veterinary Medicine. Dr Kabler completed Dr Pitcairn’s Advanced Course in Veterinary Homeopathy and is currently studying to obtain her certification in Veterinary Homeopathy. Dr Kabler started Waggin’ Tails Veterinary Services, a mobile practice that serves many clients in Massachusetts.