

About Dr. Krisi Erwin:

Dr. Krisi Erwin, a Loudoun County native, received her Doctorate of Veterinary Medicine from the Virginia-Maryland Regional College of Veterinary Medicine in 2003. She became a Certified Veterinary Acupuncturist in 2008 and a Certified Canine Rehabilitation Therapist in 2009. Dr. Erwin belongs to several professional organizations including: the American Veterinary Medical Association, the International Veterinary Acupuncture Society, the International Association for Animal Hospice and Palliative Care, the International Veterinary Academy of Pain Management, the Association for Pet Loss and Bereavement, and the American Holistic Veterinary Medical Association.



Dr. Erwin is a regular contributor to the Virginia Dog Magazine and has been very involved with several community service projects, including the Pet Loss Candlelight Remembrance Ceremony. She was very honored and humbled to be listed among the veterinarians in the Leesburg Today "Best of Loudoun Poll" for 2009.

Dr. Erwin combines conventional medicine with Traditional Chinese Veterinary Medicine and Rehabilitation techniques so she can treat the whole pet and not just the symptoms of disease. This comprehensive care helps to provide the best possible quality of life for pets throughout all life stages.

Dr. Erwin knows the human-animal bond is very strong and that families need extra care during their pet's end of life. She is committed to offering pet hospice and palliative care as well as in-home euthanasia services for Loudoun County and the surrounding areas. She is committed to supporting her families as well and has completed the Association for Pet Loss and Bereavement's training workshop for pet loss counselors.

Dr. Erwin enjoys reading, painting and drawing, and spending time with family and friends. Currently, her family includes: her husband, Jeremy, their dogs (K.C., Luna, and Sam), and cats (Mabel, Georgette, Amos, and Oliver).



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Wholistic Paws Veterinary Services



Acupuncture and Traditional Chinese Medicine

"It does not matter whether medicine is old or new, so long as it brings about a cure. It matters not whether theories be eastern or western, so long as they prove to be true."

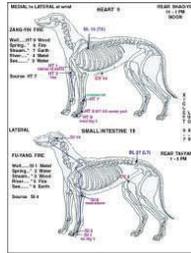
*~Jen Hsou Lin, D.V.M., Ph.D.
(translated by Dr. Penny A. Herbert)*



Acupuncture and Traditional Chinese Medicine

Q: What is acupuncture?

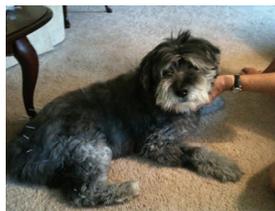
A: Acupuncture is the insertion of needles into specific points on the body to cause a desired healing effect. Acupuncture can be used as a treatment for many ailments as well as preventive medicine. Modern veterinary acupuncturists use a wide variety of equipment including solid needles, gold beads, electricity, heat, massage and low power lasers to stimulate acupuncture points.



A chart of acupuncture points.

Q: How does acupuncture work?

A: According to ancient Chinese medical philosophy, disease is the result of an imbalance of energy in the body. Acupuncture is believed to balance this energy and assist the body to heal disease. In Western terms, acupuncture can assist the body to heal itself by causing certain physiological changes. For example, acupuncture can stimulate nerves, increase blood circulation, relieve muscle spasm, and cause the release of hormones, such as endorphins (one of the body's pain control chemicals) and cortisol (a natural steroid). Although many of the physiological effects of acupuncture have been studied, many more are still unknown. Further research must be done to discover all of acupuncture's effects and its proper uses in veterinary medicine. While acupuncture is not a cure-all, it can work very well in up to 70-80% of cases (when it is indicated for that condition).



Acupuncture can treat arthritis, neurologic problems, and organ failure.

Q: What diseases can acupuncture treat?

A: Acupuncture is indicated for functional problems such as those involving paralysis, noninfectious inflammation (such as allergies), and pain. For small animals, the following are some general conditions which may be treated with acupuncture:

- Musculoskeletal problems such as arthritis, muscle soreness, or vertebral disc disease.
- Skin problems such as chronic ear infections, lick granulomas, and allergies.
- Respiratory problems such as feline asthma.
- Gastrointestinal problems, such as diarrhea and constipation.
- Neurologic problems such as seizures, nerve paralysis, and behavioral disorders.
- Sports medicine needs such as relieving minor sports injuries as they occur and helping to keep muscles and tendons resistant to injury.



Electroacupuncture can help improve neurologic function.

Q: Is acupuncture safe?

A: When administered by a properly trained veterinarian, acupuncture is one of the safest forms of medical treatment for animals. Side effects of acupuncture are rare, but they do exist. An animal's condition may seem worse for up to 48 hours after a treatment. Other animals may become sleepy or lethargic for 24 hours after acupuncture. These effects are an indication that some physiological changes are developing, and they are most often followed by an improvement in the animal's condition.

Q: Is acupuncture painful?

A: For small animals, the insertion of acupuncture needles is virtually painless. Needle insertion may cause some sensation, such as tingles, cramps, or numbness which may be uncomfortable to some animals. In all animals, once the needles are in place, there should be no pain. Most animals become very relaxed and may even become sleepy.



A therapeutic laser can be used to administer acupuncture.

Q: How long do acupuncture treatments last and how often are they given?

A: The length and frequency of acupuncture treatments varies with the condition of the patient and the method of stimulation used by the veterinary acupuncturist. Stimulation of an individual acupuncture point may take as little as 10 seconds or as much as 30 minutes. A simple acute problem, such as a sprain, may require only one treatment, whereas more severe or chronic ailments may need several or several dozen treatments. When multiple treatments are necessary, they usually begin intensively and are tapered to maximum efficiency. Patients often start with 1-3 treatments per week for 4-6 weeks. A positive response is usually seen after the first to third treatments. Once a maximum positive response is achieved (usually after 4-8 treatments), treatments are tapered so that the greatest amount of symptom free time elapses between them. Many animals with chronic conditions can taper off to 2-4 treatments per year. Your veterinary acupuncturist might also recommend including other treatments such as herbs for your pet to help enhance the effects of acupuncture.

Q: How do I choose a veterinary acupuncturist?

A: Veterinary acupuncturists must be licensed veterinarians. A veterinarian is in the best position to diagnose an animal's health problem and then to determine whether an animal is likely to benefit from an acupuncture treatment versus medical or surgical intervention. Veterinary acupuncturists should also have formal training in the practice of acupuncture for animals. The more your veterinarian knows about the traditional Chinese philosophies and Western scientific basis for acupuncture, the more sure you can be that your animals will be treated properly.

At Wholistic Paws, we recognize that many pets needing acupuncture are either too frightened or painful to travel to the veterinarian's office for treatment. In light of this, we are very committed to offering acupuncture visits for your pet in the comfort of your own home at convenient times for your family. If you are interested in acupuncture for your pet, please contact Wholistic Paws to schedule your pet's first acupuncture visit today!

