

9 year old canine with lumbar disc syndrome:

Bella improves under chiropractic care

Joseph Ierano

Abstract: Human care protocols were applied to a small dog with lumbar disc syndrome following an MVA which injured her head and neck. The dog has recovered well with basic chiropractic principles of adjusting to remove nerve interference.

Indexing Terms: Animal, chiropractic, upper cervical.

About this case

A revelation to this author's direct experience after becoming a chiropractor is that dogs have a tremendous capacity to process human touch and intention, reflected in eye contact and body feedback. Palpation carried out on the spinal and surrounding musculature and soft tissues commonly elicits calming or, on the contrary, a nip or bite to the hand as a warning. But this only serves as a worthy diagnostic and outcome measure. It is not really an act of attack as often the dog is lame. The dog simply won't bite when neural integrity is whole and when resting tone is not cocked into an immediate reflex fight/flight.

The more likely response to painful palpation is a gentle push into the professional fingers as my own beloved boxer (Julius) and more recent Schnauzer (Ava) used to do. I would go so far to posit that patting and cuddling of animals would serve neurologically as a growth and pleasure hormone switch with nothing but beneficial brain integration.

Working with humans for 23 years these particular bipedal animals will often ask 'how did you know it hurt there?', reflecting an apt summation of 5-7 years of study and half a lifetime of practice. Similarly but non-verbally, the animal will freeze or look into your gaze when you hit that spot that chiropractor keenly refers to as a spinal subluxation. It is a rewarding experience in the human animal and a magical one in the latter because we often overlook the sensitivity of animals to therapeutic touch. Ask any horse chiropractor or experienced dog chiropractor. In this case I was acting professionally but in an unprofessional setting at a staff member's home. Nevertheless it is invaluable to pass on information that helps animals avoid drugs and surgery with equal importance.



... the beauty of treating animals is the complete removal of any placebo effect. The report shows the improvements which can be attained by applying standard human protocols to animals with serious presentations ...'



Context

A house-call was made to the owner of a nine year old Shih Tzu mixed breed dog who reported that the animal (Bella) woke with paralysis of the hind legs. The owner had consulted the family veterinarian who on examination diagnosed a disc injury causing neural entrapment and paralysis. Four months prior the dog suffered a moderate impact from a car at low speed in a driveway. The impact was to the face and the dog was taken for assessment and care to the family's veterinarian. This is a clue as to why an upper cervical subluxation may have been present and etiological.

Proposed treatment was time (the equivalent of no treatment) or surgery costing an estimated \$10,000. Or a last resort was an end to suffering permanently through humane euthanasia.

On arrival Bella was sat in a corner and remained motionless until after the treatment (Figure 1). She was unable to walk on all fours, demonstrated a marked weakness in instability in the hind-quarters. This is shown as Video 1. She simply dragged her hindquarters with her front legs.

Figure 1: Bella on initial presentation



Video 1: Bella's movement on initial presentation



Examination

Bella was held on the floor by a friend as she was known to demonstrate aggression. In addition to the history, observation, and gait analysis, a physical examination by palpation was conducted which identified spinal restrictions and articular turgidity at C1 level which I considered to represent fixation with the occiput on the right. It is well documented in Atlas Orthogonal Technique programs. (1)

Palpation also revealed thoracolumbar fixation and dystonia. The level was proposed to be T12 to upper lumbar, as radiographs were unavailable.

Treatment

With regard to to earlier incident with the motor vehicle, AO protocols using Activator™ were applied to found subluxations.

Outcomes



Figure 2: Bella after chiropractic care
Bella by Daniella Leotta

Case documentation as video



What we know

In Rome and McKibbin's paper anecdotes were collected relating to the chiropractic care of animals. Personally the author has had an affinity with dogs; therein relating a story as:

Case 24. Australian Cattle Dog - Constipation

A patient presented with her female canine of some 15 years of age. The dog had been constipated for some time. The chiropractor adjusted C1, and a mid to lower dorsal subluxation. Immediately, the bitch ran out to the yard and could not contain her bowels, dropping some stool on the verandah on the way out to the lawn. (Ierano J. Personal communication, 24 June. 2011.) (2)

The *Well Adjusted Dog* (3) has sat on my shelf since I graduated and I have always appreciated it as a primer to the treatment of the animal with chiropractic care.

The upper cervical 'cranial - atlas' articulation has long been posited as an area capable of multi anatomical and physiological interference by virtue of the density of neurological influence, especially brain/body integration and coordination. In this case through cerebro-cerebellar-thalamo-spinal tracts. The thoraco-lumbar adjustment could also have influenced function; because these were both impacted by our percussion (sound) wave instrument (Activator™) resetting neural tone and receptor transmission.

The era of chemical superiority in the treatment of disease belongs to last century's mindset, now we realise that indeed the 21st Century may be where 'care of human frame' - and indeed our four legged companions - is pertinent. If we hark back to the 19th century though, DD Palmer was healing with EMF (electromagnetic force) emanating from hands. Lasers now are of use in restyling the healing matrix of damaged tissues. Perhaps the 22nd Century will be more of light, sound and hands ... but nobody has mentioned the 22nd century yet but this author.

Like any human case, Bella's case highlights dramatically that beyond drugs and surgery (and sometimes despite them) lies an area of hands on healing with scientifically grounded intuitive assessment that exists almost totally outside and medical curricula.

Upon showing this video to virtually any person, they will remain in awe that such a thing can be transmitted from human to animal of such magical prominence - yet a chiropractor knows it is anatomically and philosophically plausible in anything possessing a 'backbone' the wonders of the spine may be observed repeatedly. As indeed I have

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About the chiropractor

Dr Ierano is a 1997 graduate of Palmer Davenport and is a certified instructor in Atlas Orthogonal Technique, via the Sweat Foundation in Atlanta, USA. He has taught upper cervical specific in Australia since 2000. He now practices in Dubai. This report is published with the informed consent of the patient's owners.

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