

# “An Ounce of Prevention is Worth a Pound of Cure”

--Benjamin Franklin

## Alternative Health Options for Your Pet

By Jan Evans

Your pets are an important part of your family, so keeping your pets healthy is just as crucial as getting them well when they get sick. Your Veterinarian is always your critical ‘first responder’ when your pet is sick, but if you can keep your pets balanced and healthy, those veterinary appointments can be limited to well pet visits.

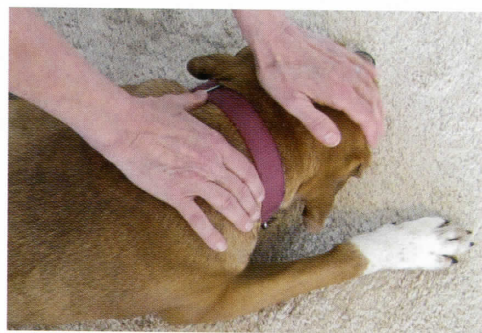
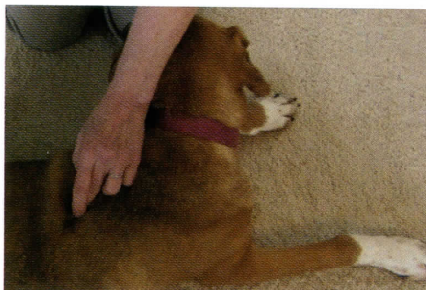
There are several holistic health modalities that focus on maintaining optimum health and wellness. Some are variations on similar themes with various overlapping session options. In Colorado, only licensed Veterinarians can legally diagnose disease and prescribe medications. Often holistic practitioners prefer to work with veterinary diagnoses in order to give your pet the best outcome possible.

### A Round-Up of Holistic Alternative Health Practices Options

The following are healing modalities that are found outside of Holistic Veterinary Medicine practices. The practitioners are often certified by the schools they attend and sometimes by professional organizations. Chiropractic is not included because in Colorado it can only be legally practiced by Veterinarians. Holistic Practitioners use different modalities to maintain or regain health and soundness, but all should consider the whole animal, its environment and lifestyle.

- Healing Touch for Animals®
- Tellington TTouch®
- Reiki/Chakra Balancing
- Acupressure
- Physical Therapy
- Massage

*Elderly pets can get the most out of their lives with Holistic Health Modalities*



*Reiki/Chakra Balancing uses energy to get the body, mind and spirit into balance for optimal health (above)*

*Acupressure uses Traditional Chinese Medicine Philosophies and Acupuncture Points to balance the whole animal for total health and soundness (left)*

### Healing Touch for Animals®

Healing Touch for Animals® is an offshoot of Healing Touch for People developed by Janet Mentgen, RN BSN in 1980. Carol Komitor developed Healing Touch for Animals® with Mentgen’s approval in the 1990’s. Both are energetic healers who seek to balance the energetic fields of their clients.

With relaxation as the key, the practitioner checks the energetic fields with a pendulum before the treatment begins and again after the treatment. The session starts with relaxing the body energetically releasing endorphins which relax the muscles and increases circulation that in turn elevates oxygen levels to absorb nutrients and builds enzymes and regulate hormones. This releases toxins to encourage healthy cell growth which promotes healing and regulates the immune system for healing.

Healing Touch for Animals® is a non-invasive energy modality to help animals heal mentally, emotionally and physically. It is available through certified practitioners as well as trainings to learn how to treat your own animals. (<http://www.healingtouchforanimals.com/Articles.asp?ID=285>)

### Tellington Ttouch®

Tellington TTouch® was developed by Linda Tellington-Jones Phd (Hon) in the early 1980’s after she had studied the use of the Feldenkrais method for people. She discovered that using the Functional Integration™ movements that helped people retrain their bodies for healing also worked to help horses relax.

She developed specific hand movements over the body to help the horses get their bodies reconnected. This reconnection helps with overall movement as well as mental and emotional responses which enhance relaxation. When an animal is in a constant state of anxiety, it’s impossible for the animal to be healthy and sound. There are TTouch® practitioners available to treat your pets, or you can learn this modality from classes and videos available here:

<http://www.ttouch.com/animalAnnouncements.shtml>  
<http://www.ttouch.com/shop/index.php>



## Reiki/Chakra Balancing

These two modalities are combined because they are basically the same energetic healing of the chakras. The difference is a matter of philosophy and for some, beliefs.

The Reiki style of healing was developed in Japan in 1914 and involves using attunements by a Reiki Master to develop the healing energy that we all possess. There are symbols involved in the attunements and healing sessions that make the inherent healing energy more powerful in the practitioner. Once an almost 'secret society' that involved years of apprenticeship, later Reiki leaders sought to share this gift with as many people as possible.  
<http://www.reiki.org/>

Because of the symbols used, some people are uncomfortable with Reiki, believing it a religious practice, so they have turned to Chakra balancing which uses the same non-invasive energy to balance the Chakras to heal the mind, body and spirit. When the chakras are open and energy is flowing freely through the body, there is health and soundness. Blockages due to disease, emotional disturbance or injury can stop or slow the energy making it difficult for the body and spirit to heal. Each of chakras corresponds to organs in the area of the chakra.

<http://naturalchakrahealing.com/animal-chakras.html>

Since everyone has the ability to use this healing ability, with a little study and practice you can use your energy through your hands to help your animals. There are Reiki and Chakra Balancing Practitioners available to treat your pets and show you how you can use your innate healing ability to help your animals stay healthy.

## Acupressure

Acupressure is based on Traditional Chinese Medicine that has been used for over 5,000 years. Acupressure is the simple use of touch on Acupressure (Acupuncture) points along the Meridians of the body to balance the energy of the body. The Meridians correspond with organ functions that govern the mind, body and emotions. The points on these energetic pathways are those that are closest to the outside of the body so are available to sedate or tonify depending on the animal's condition.

The practice of animal acupressure uses the TCM method of assessing the animal's total condition including the environment, mental, emotional and physical health. The Animal Acupressure Practitioner will use the Four Examinations that are basic to TCM: observation, listening and smelling, questions/inquiry and physical palpitation. These assessments indicate the overall condition of the animal's physical, mental and emotional health. Since the seasons and weather also affect well being, these are taken into consideration.

Because acupressure is used to help balance all the energies of the body, the practitioner facilitates healing. There may be suggestions about changes in your pet's environment, exercise routine or diet to help healing happen.

Acupressure can help with lameness and emotional problems as well as general health issues like digestion.

<http://coloradoanimalacupressure.com/>

## Physical Therapy

Physical Therapy for animals is often practiced by therapists who start out as physical therapists for people then get more training to work on animals. Physical Therapy treatments are usually referred by Veterinarians after surgery or diagnosis.

Hydrotherapy is often a part of canine physical therapy, using a pool for swimming or an underwater treadmill. Limb manipulation with muscle massage helps after surgery as it teaches the affected limb that it can bear weight again.

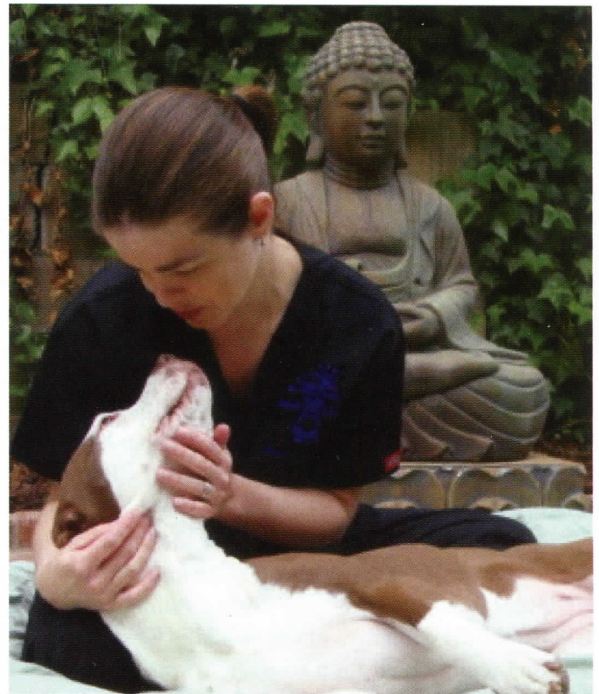
In cases of paralysis, the physical therapist might fit and order a canine wheelchair to enable the dog to go on walks again. There are also braces that are used to help support soft tissue injuries before or after surgery that physical therapists can fit.

## Massage

Pets benefit from massage in the same ways that people do. The manipulation of soft tissues relaxes the animal while helping excrete toxins and metabolic wastes from the body. Massage can increase circulation and oxygen throughout the body to facilitate healing.

After an injury, there is usually stiffness and pain. Massage helps the muscles and soft tissues to regain elasticity to help the animal regain soundness. Stress, fear and anxiety all benefit from massage and helps pets build confidence after a scary experience. All of the body's systems benefit from massage to get and stay healthy.

<http://www.buddhadog.com/>



*Pam Holt of Buddha Dog Massage in Los Angeles relaxes a client*

## Holistic Modalities Keep Your Pets Healthy

These are not the only holistic modalities to keep your animal in top health and soundness, but are the most widely available. As Ben Franklin reminds us, staying healthy and sound is possible and worth more than waiting until illness and injury require drugs and surgery.