

A Skin Story
ALTERNATIVE VETERINARY MEDICINE CENTRE

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A SKIN STORY

Jasper was an itchy dog. He awoke in the morning and he scratched. He had a walk and, every so often, he would plonk down and scratch. On his return home, he would scratch. During the evening, leaning against his owners' legs as they sat watching telly, he would scratch so hard that it would joggle a cup of hot drink they might be holding. At night, he would settle at the foot of the bed and scratch, banging the floor with his leg.

Jasper was a lovely dog and his family's love and sympathy for him would far outweigh any regrets at the prolific tufts of hair on the carpets, the wakeful nights and the embarrassing appearance of their 'moth-eaten' canine companion. Not to mention the smell! His skin smelled, his ears smelled and, when the heating came on, the house would reek of humid dog. Then there were the 'hot spots'. Suddenly, overnight, a red, hot, weeping, purulent and hairless sore would erupt. It could appear anywhere on his face, neck or flank.

These occasional 'hot spots' would be very painful and he would resist any attempt to dress them. Poor Jasper! He would keep very cheerful, nonetheless and his enthusiasm for life and for food knew no bounds. As for sweets and chocolates, he would steal them from your hand.

The skin had been under treatment with antibiotics and steroids and, if hot spots appeared, he would go down to the vets for more steroid and antibiotic injections and cream. The saddest thing about all this was that, despite the apparent ability of the drugs to clear the problem temporarily and rapidly, things were gradually getting worse overall.

One day in the local pub, his owner was talking to a fellow guest and the conversation came around to dogs. He ruefully told the story of his poor Jasper and his companion told him he'd had a dog with a similar problem. He'd been

to see a homeopathic vet. His dog was CURED! When pressed, his companion gave him the full story and an address and telephone number.

What could he lose? The next morning, he rang the number. Yes, skin problems were very frequent visitors to this practice. He was told he had to obtain a referral from his own vet, who was just down the road from his home. This was no problem (for all he knew, his vet would be delighted to see the back of him and poor Jasper!). He was glad of the prompt appointment, as Spring was advancing and Jasper was always worse in the Summer.

Ten days later, he was sitting down in an old house in rural Oxfordshire, with a stone floor, which Jasper just loved. He lay glued to the cold floor with his hot skin, while his owner chatted to the vet about Jasper's character, his lifestyle, his likes and dislikes, his condition and its history. His owner learned the benefits of feeding Jasper on 'proper' food, not on tins and bags of manufactured concoctions. He learned about many other things; the family would change much in their lives and home, in order to improve Jasper's environment. Jasper was given a thorough examination, from head to toe, nose to tail, loving the thorough but gentle attention. The prescription was some odd little pillules, labelled *Sulphur 30c*.

Cutting short a long story, Jasper went through a slight worsening, immediately after taking the pills. He then started relentlessly and seemingly miraculously to show the real improvement, which had hitherto proven to be so elusive. What had been a ragged and malodorous pooch was now a sleek, black and glossy Labrador, who scratched no more than the average dog.

Explanatory footnotes:

§1. Homeopathy works by stimulating and regulating the body's own healing processes. This is in marked contrast to the conventional approach, which often seeks to suppress the symptoms.

§2. Homeopathic prescriptions are based upon a holistic appraisal of the patient, rather than upon the name of the disease.

§3. *Sulphur* is one of the many homeopathic medicines that can treat skin problems. There are more than twenty remedies that are commonly used in skin cases. Homeopathic vets select these remedies according to the dog himself, not according to the so-called 'diagnosis'. To give an insight into why *Sulphur* was the remedy chosen, for Jasper, it is worth noting that *Sulphur* suits a 'hot' and smelly dog, who looks dirty and who is very itchy, particularly in the heat. The typical patient loves sweets, has a big appetite and is usually buoyant and enthusiastic about life.

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§4. It is important, before treating a dog's skin with homeopathy, to ensure that there has been a proper attempt at diagnosis. For instance, if the itch were to be caused by fox mange (*Sarcoptes*), that might mean failure, unless the diagnosis of mange were to be taken into account.

§5. In Homeopathy, as with some other 'alternatives', there is a possibility of the patient apparently becoming 'worse before better'. We term this a '[therapeutic aggravation](#)', since a good outcome almost invariably follows. If it occurs, stopping the remedy immediately should lead to rapid improvement. In a 'therapeutic aggravation', the patient's state of well-being clearly improves, despite the apparent (and temporary) worsening of skin symptoms. By contrast, in a general deterioration of the condition, the patient will feel less well, as symptoms worsen.

§6. In some 80% of skin cases treated by the **AVMC**, first signs of trouble occurred within three months of a vaccination event. This raises the possibility of the problem actually being caused by [vaccination](#). There is not a huge step in logic, to allow for this possibility. Vaccination is the one thing we do to dogs, that intentionally and actively upsets immune balance and skin problems usually result from a disturbance in immune balance. There is no science supporting annual vaccination and, in fact, the author's own dogs, cats and horses are only protected by the homeopathic method (whose efficacy in preventing infectious disease is, as yet, unproven, to modern science's satisfaction).

This is a true story – only the names and places have been changed, to protect the innocent!

Christopher Day - adapted from original version of March 2002

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