

ALTERNATIVE CARE FILE

Chinese medicine for arthritis & anxiety.

This is Daisy, an 8 year old Sheepdog with hip dysplasia and spondylosis (bony bridging between the vertebrae) at her lumbosacral junction. She was having trouble rising from rest, and was refusing walks and jumping into the car. She was taking a glucosamine/chondroitin blend but no other medications.

Since a puppy she also had severe separation anxiety characterized by nervous skittish behavior, drooling, and excessive thirst; this had improved some over the years. She tended to be restless at night, and had noise phobia. She had black crusty eye discharge year round.

She came for her first naturopathic consult this March. Her coat was dry, her hips were tight with reduced extension, and her lumbosacral junction was tight and tender to pressure. She was anxious and pacing. On Chinese tongue and pulse evaluation, her tongue was lavender and mildly red with longitudinal cracks, and her pulses were deep and weak.



Daisy

Daisy's Chinese diagnosis was two-fold. Her tight joints, tender low back, older age, difficulty rising, lavender tongue, and weak deep pulses suggested Bony Bi syndrome secondary to Kidney Yang deficiency. Her separation anxiety with drooling, nighttime restlessness, thirst, noise phobia, dry coat, dry crusty eyes, and dry lavender-red tongue suggested Liver heat and Qi stagnation secondary to Liver Yin/Blood deficiency. (The organs in Chinese medicine do much more than their Western counterparts, as the Chinese traditionally view the body in terms of functional domains rather than lone anatomical structures. Their medical lingo is thus much different than in the West.)

Acupuncture was begun weekly to start the healing process. Daisy was also started on fish oils, and a Chinese herbal formula for her Bony Bi syndrome called Du Huo Ji Sheng Tang given at two grams twice daily. After two acupuncture sessions she had a little more spring to her step. After five sessions she was getting up gracefully from rest and had good bounce to her walk. Her pulses were normal, but her tongue was still mildly lavender-red with cracks and her Liver Yin/Blood deficiency signs persisted. For this, the formula Yi Guan Jian was begun at two grams twice daily. Acupuncture frequency was reduced to every two weeks. A month later she was moving quite well with only a little stiffness, she was calmer with stressors, less restless at night with improved energy during the day, more outgoing, and her eyes looked great. A month after that she was moving very well, and enjoyed riding in the car which used to stress her terribly. Her tongue was only mildly lavender and not cracked. Pulses were normal. (June 2011)