

## **GOLD BEAD IMPLANTATIONS IN VETERINARY ACUPUNCTURE**

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The 1970's were an exciting decade in medicine in the United States. The introduction of acupuncture from the East opened up many avenues of healing. The public became more aware of alternative methods of healing, both for themselves and their pets. Individuals that had a positive response to non-conventional treatment modalities, such as acupuncture, homeopathy, Chinese herbs or chiropractic adjustments, began to question whether these same treatments would be beneficial for their companion animals. Fortunately, after more than 3 decades, the public has become more aware of the benefits of alternative healing methods. The Internet has greatly contributed to the public's awareness of other treatment options.

Veterinary acupuncture has been practiced in China for over 4,000 thousand years. Thousands of publications have come out of China, Japan, Korea and Europe demonstrating the benefits of acupuncture in both animals and humans. Acupuncture is the stimulation of specific points on the body utilizing thin, flexible needles for the purpose of healing. Stimulating acupuncture points causes effects that alter physiological and biochemical conditions within the body. Acupuncture releases neurochemicals, neurotransmitters and neurohormones into the bloodstream and cerebral spinal fluid. Acupuncture can stimulate nerves, relieve muscle spasms, stimulate the body's immune system, relieve pain and help to maintain the body's homeostasis. Dry needles, liquid, heat, electricity, laser or the implantation of gold or other metals can stimulate acupuncture points.

Dr. Grady Young of Georgia first attempted gold bead implantation in veterinary medicine. His techniques were modified and researched by Dr. Terry Durkes in the mid-seventies. I had the good fortune to learn from this great master a number of years ago.

Gold bead implantation is an extension of the acupuncture procedure. Correctly placed, the beads provide long-term stimulation to the acupuncture points. The procedure is done under general anesthesia. The treatment area is clipped and surgically scrubbed. Placement of the gold beads is very precise. Misplacement by even 4-5 mm greatly reduces clinical results. The beads are less than 1/16<sup>th</sup> of an inch in diameter. The gold beads I use are Magrain beads. These beads are slightly magnetized to impart a positive electric charge. Areas that require treatment and respond to implants are areas that have excessive negative charge. Typically, a 14 gauge, 1 ½ inch needle on a modified 3 cc syringe is utilized. Three or four beads are injected into each area to be treated. Most beads are placed into acupuncture points. This is usually in the subcutaneous tissue, between , or into muscle bellies. It is essential that this procedure be performed by a certified veterinary acupuncturist with advanced training and experience in gold bead implantation. Specialists in veterinary acupuncture can be obtained from [www.ivas.org](http://www.ivas.org). This will give you the names of veterinarians in your state that are qualified by the standards set forth by the International Veterinary Acupuncture Society.

Original cases of gold bead implantation were performed on German Shepherds with hip dysplasia and in dogs with seizure disorders. At that time, two beads were placed per site and an approximate 75% success rate was achieved. Today those statistics continue to improve as more clinical case research is accumulated. We have since realized that weight and age are determining factors in success rate as well as the number of beads placed per site.

Medical conditions that benefit from gold bead implantation include: hip dysplasia, elbow dysplasia, wobblers, degenerative joint diseases, intervertebral disc disease, epilepsy/seizures, carpal and tarsal problems, lick granulomas, traumatic nerve injury, chronic cruciate injury, brachial plexus injury, fecal and urinary incontinence, asthma, allergic dermatitis,

and long term injuries. The list continues to expand as further research is conducted. In my hospital, pets that undergo this procedure are sent home the same day. Follow –up examinations are generally on a weekly basis depending on the condition being treated.

Additional information regarding gold bead implants in companion animals can be attained by calling my office at 610-558-1616.

Dr. DiLeva is a University of Pennsylvania graduate and practices alternative and conventional veterinary medicine. She is a certified veterinary acupuncturist and a certified veterinary chiropractor. She can be reached at the Animal Wellness Center in Chadds Ford, Pa. at 610-558-1616 for appointments, speaking engagements or telephone consultations. Her web site is [www.altpetdoc.com](http://www.altpetdoc.com)