



GENERAL PRACTITIONER CERTIFICATE IN WESTERN VETERINARY ACUPUNCTURE AND CHRONIC PAIN MANAGEMENT

SYLLABUS

Overall outcomes of the course: at the end of the course the participants should be able to:

- Apply safe and competent needling
- Define the principles of point selection
- Palpate and understand the significance of myofascial trigger points
- State why there is a relatively small amount of clinical acupuncture research in the veterinary species
- Understanding chronic pain generally and in the context of veterinary acupuncture
- Understanding the current research and basis for the treatment of a wide range of clinical conditions

Introduction

- Overview of acupuncture, its history, some TCM nomenclature and the introduction of acupuncture to the West
- Safety Brief for needling of fellow participants

Needling practice:

- Experience needling at Li4
- Points: neck, shoulder and arm
- Point finding in the veterinary species

Introduction to trigger points

- Trigger point theory in man and animals
- Finding trigger points

Pain recognition in animals

Principles of point selection

Points in the lower back and leg

- Point finding in the veterinary species
- Needling practice

Neurphysiology of acupuncture

- Revision of pain pathways and the nervous system
- Explaining the principles of point selection

Point location dogs and horses

- Practical handling and location
- Further principles of point selection
- Point selection exercises – lumbar, lumbosacral region and hindlimb

- Clinical discussion

Clinical aspects of treatment

- Which patients to treat
- Which conditions to treat
- Contraindications/cautions
- Needles and needling techniques
- Frequency and timing of treatments

Safety and side effects

- Safety of acupuncture
- Serious adverse side effects
- Minor adverse side effects
- Relevance to the veterinary species

Face and abdomen points

- Point location
- Practice needling
- Use of different needling techniques
- Discussion of relevance of face points in animals

Segmental acupuncture

- The use of acupuncture for functional non pathological disorders
- Paraspinal needling – theory and practice
- Other approaches to segmental needling
- Treatment of visceral conditions: point selection exercises

Introduction to electroacupuncture

- Electroacupuncture theory
- Electroacupuncture experience

Dermatology

- Theory and research of acupuncture in dermatology
- Consideration of dermatological conditions
- Point selection exercises

Research and audit

- Challenges of acupuncture research
- Examples of acupuncture research
- Questions to ask and pitfalls to avoid

Running a veterinary acupuncture clinic

- Safety
- Practical considerations
- Timings and pricing

Electroacupuncture (EA)

Introduction to the use of electricity in medicine

Electroacupuncture - theory

- Safety
- Contraindications and cautions
- Principles

- Effects
- Indications

Electroacupuncture- practical

- Familiarization with the EA device
- Use of the device
- Use in specific conditions

Update on acupuncture for musculoskeletal conditions

Current research – human

Current research – animal

Specific conditions – hip, stifle, hock

Specific conditions- shoulder, elbow, carpus

Treatment of pain / understanding of pain for the acupuncturist

Introduction to pain

- Acute pain, definitions of pain, physiology of pain
- How chronic pain compares with acute pain
- Neurophysiology of acute and chronic pain
- Classifications of pain
- Distinction between pain and suffering

How pain manifests as a behavioural problem:

- Aggression
- Anxiety and fear
- Compulsive disorders
- Miscellaneous/bizarre

Causes of pain in the cat and dog

- Musculoskeletal
- Neurological
- Visceral
- Oral/aural/dermatological

Classifications of pain

- Nociceptive
- Neuropathic

Assessment of pain:

- Current status of assessment techniques
- Triangulation
- Palpation techniques
- Gait/ muscular development/movement/posture

Treatment of osteoarthritis as an example of chronic pain

- Osteoarthritis – the disease
- Sources of pain in OA
- An ABCDE approach to OA and where acupuncture fits into this.

Examination of a patient

- Superficial examination
- Effects of arousal and anxiety
- Forelimb lameness – hindlimb problem?
- Clues from physical difficulties
- Allodynia and hyperalgesia
- Trigger points – relevance and interpretation

Approach to patients:

- Reducing anxiety
- Reducing central sensitization
- Good responders vs sensitive patients
- Sedation – when to use and what to use

When acupuncture is not enough

- Outcome measures
- When acupuncture is not enough- what to do next

Pharmacological interventions

- Licensed medications – indications/safety/side effects
- Unlicensed medications- indications/safety/side effects

Physical therapies

- Challenges of assessing physical therapies
- Physiotherapy/hydrotherapy
- Other physical therapies

Other complementary and alternative therapies (CAM)

- Challenges of assessing CAM
- Examples and results of studies

Beyond musculoskeletal pain

Challenges of acupuncture research

- “Placebo” and “nocebo” effects
- Examples of studies
- Practice reading, reviewing and evaluating acupuncture research papers

Update on dermatology and practical applications

Case examples/studies

Update on psychology and practical applications

Update on visceral conditions and practical applications

Update on acupuncture for ocular problems

Update on acupuncture for neurological conditions and practical applications

Miscellaneous syndromes