

What is Veterinary Spinal Manipulation Therapy (VSMT)?

VSMT is a safe and effective way to improve health, relieve pain and improve nervous system function. The nervous system controls every other system in the body- it is therefore extremely important to make sure it is working optimally! Doctors certified in animal chiropractic or veterinary spinal manipulation therapy look for abnormal or restricted movement of joints of the spine and extremities (these are called subluxations). They focus on restoring normal joint movement and use high velocity low amplitude “thrusts “ at specific joint angles to help restore nerve function. This improves soft tissue function, decreases pain, improves range of motion and increases health.

Subluxations may occur because of injury, illness or wear and tear. Over and above all of the regular stressors our pets encounter on a daily basis, we often also ask our pets to do jobs that they wouldn't normally do such as jump obstacles or perform agility or perform certain tricks! Combined with regular veterinary care VSMT can significantly improve your pets quality of life.

I am interested in pursuing veterinary spinal manipulation therapy for my pet, how do I find someone reliable?

When searching for an animal chiropractor or a veterinary spinal manipulation therapist for your pet you should look for someone that is certified. Doctors that are certified are licensed doctors of chiropractic or veterinary medicine who have received specialized training from an accredited approved animal chiropractic program (for example: The Veterinary Chiropractic Learning Center). Graduates have completed over 220 hours of classroom learning, many readings , case presentations and they have had lots of supervised hands on training. They may also have additional certification through the College of Animal Chiropractors (CoAC) or the American Veterinary Chiropractic Association (AAVC).

Dr. Danielle Sample received her certification in VSMT from The Veterinary Chiropractic Learning Center and has additional certification through the College of Animal Chiropractors. She particularly enjoys helping senior pets with mobility issues, pets recovering from injury or with unexplained lameness and also enjoys helping canine athletes gain a competitive edge by keeping them performing at the best of their abilities.

What Is the difference between someone certified as an Animal Chiropractor vs. someone certified in Veterinary Spinal Manipulation Therapy?

To clarify, veterinarians that have completed a course such as the one mentioned above are certified in veterinary spinal manipulation therapy. Human chiropractors that complete the same course are certified as animal chiropractors. Both are qualified to help your pets.

How do I know if my pet needs Veterinary Spinal Manipulation Therapy?

VSMT can benefit almost all pets however it is of particular benefit to animals recovering from injury, athletes and senior pets with mobility issues. It can be incorporated into regular maintenance care to prevent injuries from occurring. It will help increase range of motion and flexibility. VSMT can also help keep muscles and joints working optimally- preventing issues from occurring. Older arthritic patients are also great candidates for VSMT, sometimes regular treatments can even help decrease the amount of medications needed to keep your senior pet comfortable. VSMT can also be useful for a variety of other conditions such as skin conditions, anal gland impactions and urinary incontinence!

- Animals displaying signs of pain
- Low neck carriage
- Trouble chewing
- Muscle tension
- Abnormal posture
- Abnormal gait
- Limping
- Stiffness
- Decreased performance
- Doesn't want to climb stairs or jump on furniture
- Weakness
- Abnormal tail carriage
- Suddenly always sitting with legs to one side
- Dogs or cats with known arthritis or orthopaedic disease
- Anal gland impactions
- Urinary incontinence
- Lick Granulomas

Veterinary Spinal Manipulation Therapy plays an important role in optimizing performance, but it is also beneficial to prevent disease and improve quality of life.