



# Natural Help for...

## Pet Viral Infection



### What is a Viral Infection?

Like us, animals are susceptible to a number of different viruses, and as a pet owner, it can be very distressing to see our beloved pets fall ill. A virus is a **tiny organism that causes an infection** in the body; however, in order for a virus to survive, it must have a host. The time a virus can exist outside the body differs between viruses, but most do not survive long outside the body.

One notable exception to this is the canine parvovirus which can last many months in the outside environment and is resistant to many disinfectants. Once within a host, the virus can attach itself to living cells and reproduce, either killing the cells or altering their function. It will then **multiply and produce many more virus particles which cause illness**. Most viruses will only infect one type of cell, for example, the viruses causing influenza will only infect cells of the upper respiratory tract.

There are a number of [viruses that can affect dogs and cats](#). Common viral illnesses in cats include cat flu, feline panleukopaemia (FeLV), (FIV), while viral illnesses in dogs include canine distemper, canine parvovirus, and canine hepatitis amongst others. While **most viruses affecting our pets cannot be transmitted to humans**, one exception is the very serious rabies virus which affects both cats and dogs and can be transmitted to humans.

### What Causes Viral Infection?

Both people and animals frequently come into contact with viruses and bacteria, and when they attack, your pet's immune system **takes action to fight off the infection**. In some instances, the immune system will destroy an invading virus before signs of infection show; however, very resilient viruses as well as lowered immune systems can result in your pet becoming ill.

Like human viruses, animal viruses are most likely to spread when your pet comes into contact with other animals. Many **viral infections are spread in places such as kennels and shelters** where animals are in close contact to each other. However, viruses cannot be avoided all together as they can be carried in by the wind, and even brought into households by unsuspecting pet owners. For this reason, vaccinations and immune boosting measures should always be taken as a precaution.

### Diagnosing Viral Infection

If your pet shows symptoms of illness then a trip to the vet is often necessary. Your pet's veterinarian will rely on you to give an accurate description of symptoms, and will also physically examine your pet. Depending on **your pet's symptoms**, your

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veterinarian may recommend some tests before making an accurate diagnosis.

## Help for Viral Infection

[Treatment of viral infections](#) depends entirely on the virus diagnosed and the severity of the condition. Mild viruses can sometimes be treated symptomatically while more serious viruses require more vigorous treatment. Some viruses such as the Feline Immunodeficiency Virus (FIV) or Feline leukemia (FeLV) cannot be cured and so treatment is usually supportive and aimed at **keeping your pet's immune system as strong** as possible.

In many cases, the [treatment of viral infections](#) is supportive and aimed at supporting your pet while the virus runs its course. Depending on the virus and symptoms, treatment may include intravenous **fluid replacement, anti-vomiting or anti-diarrheal** medication, and bronchodilators such as aminophylline for wheezing and coughing.

Because antibiotics are ineffective in the treatment of viruses, they are often not recommended, however, in some cases antibiotics are given as a preventative to guard against possible secondary bacterial infections. Frequently recommended antibiotics include doxycycline or trimethoprim-sulfa. Remember that after a course of antibiotics, **your pet's immune system may become weakened** so be sure to take necessary measures to increase immune functioning if antibiotics are necessary.

Lastly, there are a number of vaccines available to protect your pet from a variety of [viral infections](#).

## Natural Remedies

Natural and herbal remedies can be used along side veterinary treatment to boost the immune system and help reduce some of the symptoms of viral infections. Echinacea purpurea is well known for its excellent benefits for immune functioning and for its **antifungal, antiviral and antibacterial** properties.

Echinacea can help improve weakened immune systems and can be of benefit to those pets recovering from infection, as well as those suffering from incurable [viral infections](#) such as Feline Immunodeficiency Virus (FIV). Another natural ingredient used to **boost the immune system and assist with recovery** is Indian ginseng.

In addition to boosting the immune system, herbal and homeopathic ingredients can be used to relieve your pet from various symptoms caused by the infection. Dandelion works to **promote and restore liver and digestive health**, while Borax (30C) can be administered to help treat mouth ulcers and cold sores (which often develop in pets along with influenza-type viruses). Lastly, the homeopathic ingredients Phosphorus (30C) Pulsatilla (30C) and Bryonia (6C) can be used to treat coughs, sore throats and congestion.

## Tips for guarding against viral infections

- The first step in guarding against viral infection in your pet is to help boost their immune system. This can be done by ensuring your pet is eating a



### Michele Carelse, Clinical Psychologist



All of our natural remedies are formulated by our expert team of herbalists, naturopaths and homeopaths, and headed by Michele Carelse.

Michele has had years of experience in the manufacturing and use of natural remedies for both people and pets. In addition, she is a trained Clinical Psychologist and has been incorporating natural remedies into her treatment of patients with depression, anxiety, ADD, ADHD and stress for many years with spectacular results.

healthy high-quality diet, getting sufficient exercise and providing your pet with natural immune boosting supplements that they would usually have access to in nature.

- Vaccinate your pet against serious disease. While annual vaccinations may not be necessary, a simple blood test called a titer test can determine which vaccines your pet needs. If you are planning to put your pet in a kennel when you go away, then getting your pet vaccinated against certain illnesses is a good idea.
- Avoid letting your pet have contact with other unvaccinated pets.
- Make sure your pet has a clean sanitation area that is not used by other foreign animals.
- Minimize the exposure your pet has to harsh chemicals. Cleaning products, pest repellents, and even certain pet products and medications contain large amounts of harsh chemicals that can be damaging to your pet's immune system. When possible, opt for more natural alternatives.
- As an animal lover, it's hard not to empathize with a lost or stray cat or dog and immediately take it into your home and offer it a warm bed. However, this could endanger the health of your other pets. Always take stays to the vet or a nearby shelter first.

## The Natural Approach

While Western medicine has become the norm in many cultures, it is not the only treatment option. Conventional western medicine, often called allopathic medicine, is the system of medicine taught at most medical schools and most pharmaceutical and synthetic medicines are manufactured and marketed according to the principles of allopathic medicine. Allopathic medicine is also sometimes called orthodox medicine.

Because most of us in the Western world have grown up in a society in which allopathic medicine is the prevailing norm, we forget that, only a few decades ago, homeopathic, herbal and other natural medicines were commonly available – and freely used even by conventional doctors and veterinarians. While there are often heated debates about which system of medicine is 'better' than the other, many responsible doctors and vets (whether they are allopathic or not) recognize that both have a role to play in the treatment program.

Just like humans, domesticated animals like dogs and cats are affected by the health hazards of modern living. Pollution, poor nutrition, stress and unhealthy lifestyles can lead to a variety of illnesses and conditions that are very similar to those experienced by humans. In fact, many, if not most pet health concerns can be addressed by helping your pets to live a healthier lifestyle. While it has its place, conventional medicine for animals and 'modern technology' have failed our pets in many ways.

According to pet expert and author CJ Puotinen, most holistic veterinarians and animal health care professions list annual vaccinations and commercial pet foods as the major contributory cause in the rising rates of chronic illness in pets today. Similarly, Juliette de Bairacli Levy, respected author and renowned animal breeder, points out that contrary to the belief that mass vaccination and antibiotic use will contribute to a decrease in disease, the opposite has in fact proved true. Like their human counterparts, today's pets are becoming more and more vulnerable to chronic disease and ill health. This has led many veterinarians to search for alternatives and to espouse more holistic methods of keeping our pets

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[Natural Holistic Health Blog](#)

[PetAlive Natural & Herbal Remedies for Pets](#)

[Native Remedies - Natural & Herbal Remedies](#)

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healthy.

"In the wild, animals instinctively seek out healing herbs to help them when they are ill or undernourished. In fact, Asclepius, the ancient Greek god of medicine, respected dogs very highly for their ability to seek out and eat medicinal herbs in the wild. This ability is shared by other animals, including cats. We are coming to realize that nature often has the answers - but animals have always known this! Natural medicine can help your pet just as it can help you. While there is always a place for conventional veterinary medicine, natural medicine can compliment conventional veterinary care and in many cases do just as well. I have applied the same care and research that have gone into our Native Remedies range for adults and children to the development of pet-friendly, safe and effective natural remedies for animals. As always, all remedies are formulated to the highest therapeutic standards and manufactured under strict pharmaceutical conditions for your peace of mind and the well being of your pets. " Michele Carelse, Clinical Psychologist.

"When a veterinary surgeon practices the use of homeopathic medicine and is asked why he does so, he may give one of several answers. The simple answer would be that the results are good, an emphatic answer would be that homeopathic treatment has no unpleasant or dangerous side effects, while still achieving successful results.

The [PetAlive Homeopathic range](#) has been formulated with this knowledge and is specifically designed to treat your pet in a holistic and natural manner."

Dr. Glenn Ferguson  
M-Tech Homeopathy, Doctor of Chinese Medicine

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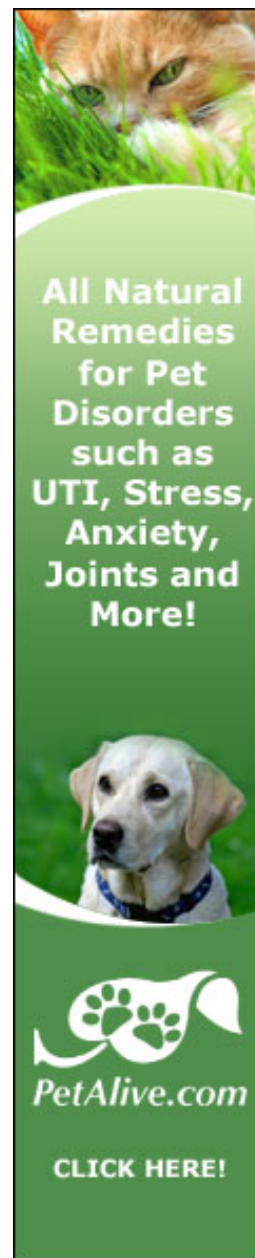
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