

# Herbal Dog Care

## INTRODUCTION

In Lesson 1, you'll learn the basics of holistic health care for your dog, how to use various herbs to maintain health, and other ways to care for your pet naturally. Dr. Randy Kidd, D.V.M., Ph.D., a conventionally trained veterinarian, discovered that herbal remedies are empowering and effective for pets. He has used herbs for his own pets, as well as in his practice, for many years. Dr. Kidd views herbs as one aspect of holistic health care for animals and an important component of his model for health, "As One with Nature."

According to Dr. Kidd, not all dogs react the same way to the same health issue or the same way to herbal remedies. Dogs have individual personalities and constitutions, so a remedy given to one dog may not have the same effect as it does on another. Keep this observation in mind if you find that an herb isn't quite working as you expected it to.

## OBJECTIVES

When you complete this lesson, you'll be able to

- Describe Dr. Kidd's holistic protocol model for dogs
- Explain the influence of lifestyle, human-animal interaction, and nutrition on dogs' health
- Describe supplemental health-care modalities for dogs
- Discuss the benefits of using herbs for dogs
- Describe Dr. Kidd's four steps of assessment for dogs
- Discuss herbal tonics and the body systems for which they're used
- Explain the dose-to-effect method of administering herbs to dogs



- Describe various methods of administering herbs to dogs
- Discuss herbs for organs, systems, and special conditions for dogs

## ASSIGNMENT 1: INTRODUCTION TO HERBALISM FOR DOGS

**Read this introduction to Assignment 1. Then read Chapters 1–5, pages 1–46 in *Dr. Kidd’s Guide to Herbal Dog Care*.**

Assignment 1 features an introduction to herbalism and an explanation of the concept of holistic medicine. You’ll learn about the 10 steps to holistic health care for dogs, as well as Dr. Kidd’s holistic protocol for health, which he calls “As One with Nature.” The assignment addresses the safety and efficacy of herbs; the concept of *synergy*, or combined action of herbs; herbs’ *bidirectionality*, or ability to feed a “specific hunger” of the body; and the many uses of a single plant. In addition, you’ll learn about the potency of herbs, general rules for administering herbs to dogs, and methods of delivery, such as tinctures, teas, capsules, and standardized extracts.

### Introduction to Herbalism for Dogs

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This chapter presents a brief introduction to herbalism and holistic medicine. The chapter includes a discussion of taking responsibility not only for health, but also for the planet, because we really can’t separate the health of one from the health of the other. You’ll also learn the most effective way to use the book.

### 10 Steps to Holistic Health Care for Dogs

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In Part 1 of your text, you’ll study Dr. Kidd’s pyramid model of his holistic protocol for health, “As One with Nature.” He discusses how to interpret the model, which is “resting on a

healthy Mother Earth.” Make sure you know the basics of the protocol, the sequence of various healing methods, and the importance of balance among body, mind, heart, and spirit.

## Using Herbs for Dogs' Health

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Herbs add nutrition, flavor, and spice to foods; they're tonic, and many have specific medicinal uses. While some are safe, others may be contraindicated at specific times in your pet's life cycle, such as during pregnancy. In Chapter 3, you'll learn an easy method of assessing when your pet is ill, which includes an understanding of body systems, looking for outside factors that may contribute to illness, and the need for cleansing and herbal facilitators.

## Learning about Herbs for Dogs

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In this chapter, Dr. Kidd offers some advice on learning about herbs. Because there are so many remedies, most herbal practitioners recommend getting to know a few herbs very well—those that are most likely to meet your needs. Once you're thoroughly familiar with those herbs, you can add a few more as the need comes up. Remember that your interest makes it easier to learn what your pet needs, and it's best to take your time. In addition, get to know the organ systems, start an herbal library, or join an herb-of-the-month club. If you're actively using the herbs you study, it will be easier to remember what they're for and how they work. Growing your own herbs is another way to get to know them.

## Delivery Systems for Dogs

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While it's fairly easy to persuade an adult human to drink herbal tea or swallow a capsule, it can be more of a challenge to get the remedies into your pets. Dr. Kidd suggests using a tea or bulk herbs mixed with your dog's food or water for easy administration. Tinctures are sometimes a good solution because only a few drops are needed, although capsules or tablets may be hidden in food. The important thing is to give your pet the correct dosage for his or her condition and situation.

Because each animal is an individual requiring a particular dosage, there are no set amounts of herbs to be given, but rather a range of dosage and potency that can be given for various health conditions. Pay special attention to “General Rules for Administering Herbs to Dogs” on page 35 in the text. You’ll also need to know how to select good-quality herbal products and store them properly.

If you’re familiar with herbal remedies for humans, you’ll have no trouble with the remainder of the chapter, which addresses various forms of herbal remedies. Just as with caring for humans, you’ll have to start slowly and help your pet adapt to the new flavors and applications you’re using.

## Learning Activities

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The following activity is intended to supplement your reading by providing additional resources or hands-on experience. Complete your activity before moving on to the self-check.

Review “My Favorite Tonics” on page 21, where Dr. Kidd lists his favorite tonic herbs by body system. Select an herb for your pet, based on a body system you feel needs strengthening, and purchase the herb in bulk. Then make a decoction and add a bit to your dog’s food. How did your dog respond to the taste? If he or she didn’t initially accept it, how long did it take to adapt? Take notes each week on your pet’s response to the tonic and compare it to previous weeks. At what point does your pet achieve the result you were striving for?



# Self-Check 1

**At the end of each section of *Herbs for Companion Animals*, you'll be asked to pause and check your understanding of what you've just read by completing a "Self-Check" exercise. Answering these questions will help you review what you've studied so far. Please complete *Self-Check 1* now.**

1. According to the author's definition of holistic medicine, the health of the organism is tied to the health and well-being of other \_\_\_\_\_ around it.
2. In Dr. Kidd's first case study, a mild tea of \_\_\_\_\_ was used topically to soothe and repair the hot spot on Rufus.
  - a. echinacea
  - b. calendula
  - c. goldenseal
  - d. black walnut
3. The author sees the heart as both a source of \_\_\_\_\_ and an internal organ.
4. *True or False?* Second-hand smoke can damage your dog's lungs.
5. Dr. Kidd believes that conventional medicine has excellent \_\_\_\_\_ tools.
6. In herbal science, plant \_\_\_\_\_ is defined as the possibility of opposing actions to help balance the body and prevent improper use of the plant.
7. *True or False?* Dr. Kidd supports the view that it's better to learn one herb in depth than several herbs superficially.
8. The author suggests that you should keep at least \_\_\_\_\_ plant books as herbal references for your home library.
9. What is Dr. Kidd's basic dosing rule?  
\_\_\_\_\_
10. Dried herbs should be dry, yet \_\_\_\_\_, retain color, and not be brittle.
11. A tincture must be \_\_\_\_\_ percent alcohol to last two years or longer.
12. The two criteria used to judge remedies are \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.

**Check your answers with those on page 45.**

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