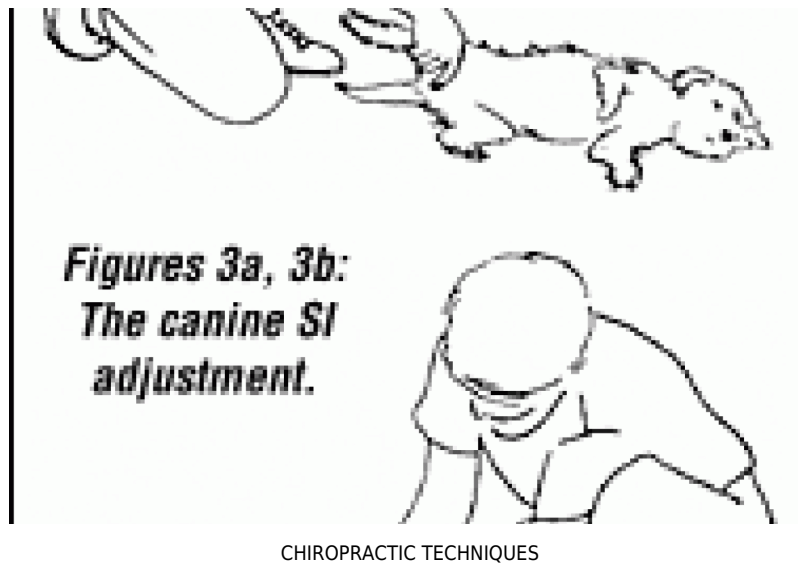


## Dynamic Chiropractic



# Animal Chiropractic - Practice Building and Technique

It's no secret that every person needs chiropractic care. What remains a secret is an effective way of getting to the people who need it. Here's a way that I've been using for 20 years - I adjust animals. If you set out to adjust dogs and horses, you'll wind up with a windfall of new human patients!

First, a small disclaimer: Make sure adjusting animals is legal in your state, meaning that it's all right for you to adjust animals with a veterinary referral. Getting new human patients by adjusting animals will work whether you adjust dogs or horses. I'll discuss both.

### Horses

Once you know how to adjust horses, the best and most economical way to get horse patients in is to conduct a half-hour talk/demonstration at a local saddle shop. These are also known as "tack and feed" shops. Busy shops have dozens, even hundreds of horse owners stopping by on the weekends. You naturally offer this talk for free, and because it's free, you should have at least 20 to 30 people in attendance; many, of course, will be curiosity seekers. This is fine because you will expose them to chiropractic.

To arrange the talk, do two things: First, make up at least 500 flyers announcing the demonstration. These are distributed right at the tack shop in a prominent place so the customer can take one on the way out. This is done two weeks before the event. Next, arrange for a horse to be waiting for you outside with its owner. Talk about chiropractic philosophy, subluxations, and the benefits of chiropractic for only five minutes. Spend the rest of the time demonstrating range of motion tests, explaining the full spine and extremities, and show them how the atlas is misaligned all the way down the back (see the "yes" test from my previous article in *DC*, June 18, 2001, page 34, or at [www.chiroweb.com/archives/19/13/07.html](http://www.chiroweb.com/archives/19/13/07.html)). If you find that one side of the atlas is stuck, ask the owner if the horse shows any pain on the subluxated side. Get the idea?

Have your business cards on hand. If you adjust horses, your cards should read, "Equine

Chiropractic Services," and on the bottom, "By veterinary referral only."

Once the horse becomes your patient, the owner will also become your patient - maybe not that day, but in the near future. Here's the real secret: People who are too afraid or too skeptical to try chiropractic on themselves, yet don't think twice about having their pets adjusted, especially if it's going to help their horses win races or jump better. When they see that chiropractic works for their pets, they'll want it for themselves.

This next step may seem rather aggressive, but it works. When you make a stable call, make sure you bring your portable adjusting table to the barn with you. As long as you're there, ask the horse owner or others there if they want their spines checked, as well. I know one very aggressive chiropractor that brings his portable table to his horse demonstrations. As long as he has the people there, he feels that he might as well screen them, too. However, even though he obtains a lot of patients doing this, it smacks a little of "bait-and-switch." You have to use a softer approach to do this, and this is done only after you've completed your full horse talk at the tack shop. But once you get one person on your table, others will follow.

For those who only want to adjust dogs, you should work out of a vet's office in your area. I know of some chiropractors that adjust dogs right in their human clinics. Bad idea! Even if it's okay with the veterinary board, it's not okay with the board of health. These two practices should be kept separate! First, you have to make arrangements with a local vet - not a rental arrangement. The vet isn't interested in the measly \$200 per month his extra room may be worth. The vet is interested in providing more services to animals. There's no fee splitting. You keep everything you make from adjusting, and the vet keeps everything he makes. The vet benefits from you being there because he does all the x-rays and bloodwork on your patients, plus, you'll send him new patients. Remember, the closer the vet's office is to your office the better. Being 20 miles away won't work. If both offices are close, you can cross-refer with no problem. You have human patients who have pets, and the vet has animal patients who have people. Once in the vet's office, you can hand out your "people practice" card, and reciprocate by handing out the vet's cards in your office.

One last thing: I charge \$75 for each horse adjustment, and \$40 for dogs. I also have a five-horse minimum, meaning that I won't travel 20 miles or so just to make \$75. I also charge a traveling fee in addition to the adjustment fee, which is one dollar per mile each way.

Dogs

### Adjusting the Sacroiliac Joint

Adjusting the canine sacroiliac (SI) joint has little to do with hip dysplasia, which will be discussed in another article. A dog that suffers from an SI subluxation will have difficulty launching itself up on furniture, and in more severe cases, have difficulty walking, jumping, and running. An SI subluxation is caused by trauma, i.e., running fast and stopping suddenly, or a direct blow to the top of the rump, which will cause a muscle spasm there.

### Testing the SI Joint for Subluxations

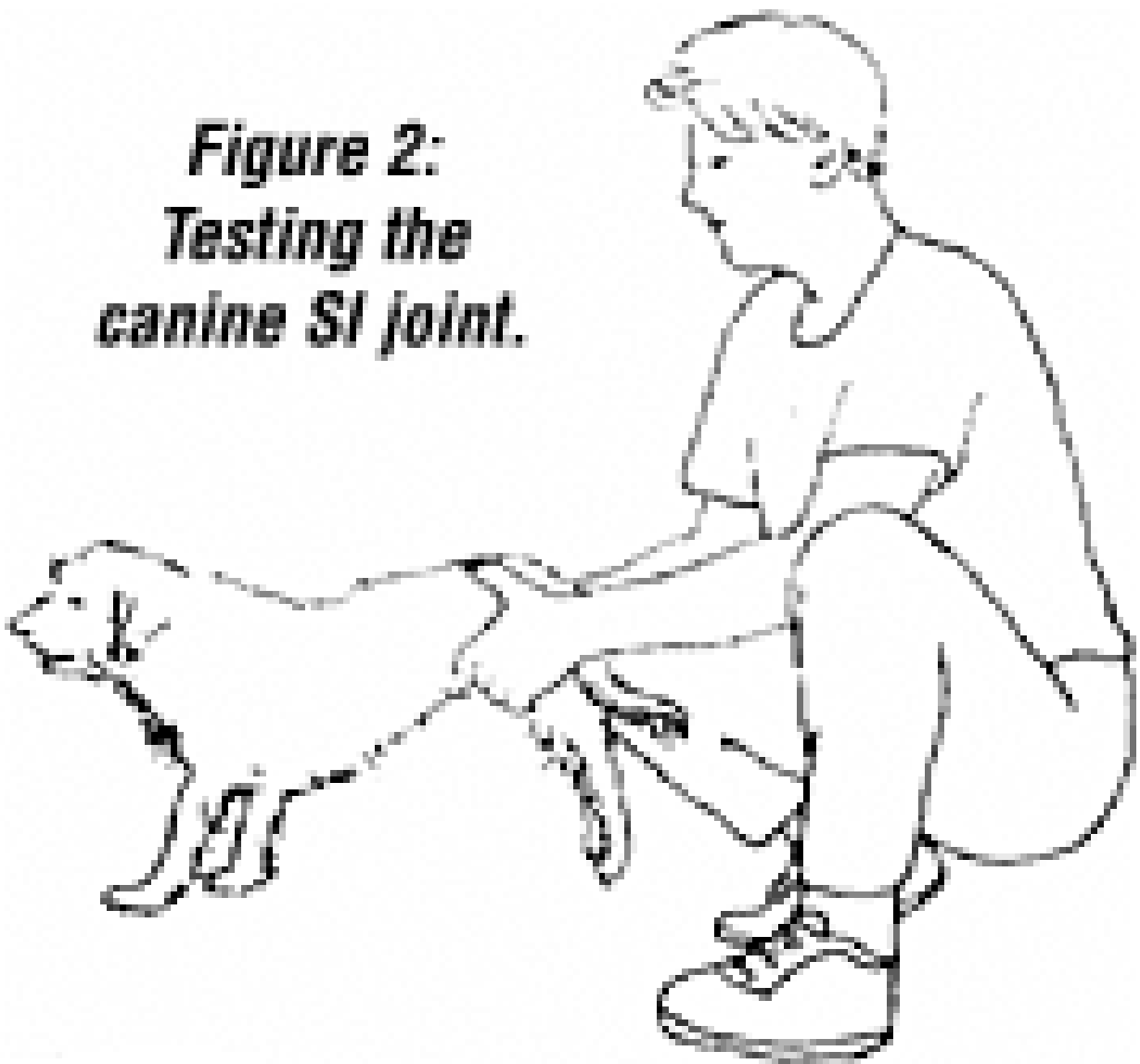
The bony contact points for the SI test and adjustment are the *tuber sacrales*, also known as the PSISs. These are located on top of the rump - approximately five inches apart from each other, or more, depending on the size of the breed.

***Figure 1:  
The location  
of the  
canine tuber  
sacrales.***



You have to test each SI joint separately. Test the first one by placing your thumb or pisiform firmly on one tuber while extending that leg backward (the ipsilateral leg) as far as it goes. Do this for both hind legs and ask yourself which leg extended back the least. That's the subluxated SI joint.

**Figure 2:  
Testing the  
canine SI joint.**



The SI Adjustment

The SI adjustment is similar to the test. This move is best performed when the dog is recumbent, painful side up; or simply adjust the dog while he or she is standing on all fours. Place your thumb or pisiform on the affected side's tuber, extend the back leg as far as it goes so it's fully taken to tension, then apply a quick impulse straight down (dorsal to ventral) on the tuber. Retest the joint. Remember, not a hard impulse, but very fast. If you prefer, you can use an Activator to provide the impulse once you've taken the joint to tension. If you use the Activator, twist its collar up so three rings are exposed from the bottom.



I appreciate any feedback from you. Please direct your comments, questions or animal adjusting techniques to me at [dkamen4492@aol.com](mailto:dkamen4492@aol.com).

*Daniel Kamen,DC  
Buffalo Grove, Illinois*

