

Unto the Least of These

Fred Barge, DC, PhC

What you do unto the least of these, my brethren, ye do also unto me. The biblical admonition comes to mind, and as chiropractic faces the challenge of so-called "scientific proof," I do hope we consider the suffering of animals in our clamor for acceptance.

Neuroforaminal encroachment, due to subluxated vertebrae, is documented by a host of references. Modern texts such as, *Nerve and Nerve Injuries*, by Sir Sidney Sunderland, M.D.; *Neck and Arm Pain*, by Rene Cailliet, M.D.; *The Cervical Syndrome*, by Ruth Jackson, M.D.; and many more, all speak to our original assertion that nerve root encroachment is caused by vertebral subluxation. In this light, to torture animals for more proof is a heartless transgression of our "God in Man" principles. What the chiropractic profession needs is clinical research -- case studies of the efficacy of our care in organic conditions. This can be done without following the "medical model" of animal experimentation. Computer protocol can be set by our colleges, chiropractors with computers, and multiple-doctor chiropractic facilities could be utilized to produce case study data. Chiropractic college student clinics cannot be expected to do the job of clinical research and certainly results from such facilities would be jeopardized by the level of practitioners doing the adjusting.

Clinical studies can also be run on sick animals. I personally have adjusted scores of dogs, including many dachshunds that are paralyzed from the waist down from a peculiar subluxation. Yes, they even have cauda equina syndrome, so don't adjust them in the office; and yes, they walk again and have full bladder and bowel control after chiropractic adjustments. The subluxations are found in the lower thoracic and upper lumbar regions, usually with a concomitant upper cervical subluxation. Speaking of upper cervical subluxations, epilepsy comes to mind. Dogs do suffer from epilepsy and, just as in people, they respond well to chiropractic care. I have adjusted a number of epileptic dogs but one particular case of mine stands out in my mind. I wrote an article a few years back for the *Prairie States Chiropractic Journal* on this case. Allow me to quote as follows:

"'Suzie sent me.' I'm sure I had a surprised look on my face when I noticed on the new patient report form, under the heading referral -- 'Suzie sent me.' Oh yes, I knew who Suzie was; she was a lovable little lady, a cocker spaniel who had epilepsy. I caught on quickly and smiled at the patient and said, 'Oh, Suzie sent you.' He said, 'Yes, if you could help Suzie, I figured you could help me.'

"Everybody in her neighborhood knew Suzie; she ran quite free in the rural township that her master resided in. They all knew that if she suddenly went into a rolling, kicking, and threshing seizure, it was epilepsy. Yes, she was on drugs, but it still did not control the problem.

"Well, it just so happened that Suzie's mistress sustained a stubborn brachial nerve syndrome and she came to me for help. She happened to listen to a woman in the waiting room talk about how much her daughter had been helped by chiropractic care for her epilepsy. The next thing you know, she asked me if I could help Suzie. I said most likely I could; anybody with a backbone could benefit from chiropractic care. Well, I took care of Suzie as I have taken care of hundreds of animals. I adjust them

outside of the clinic on the wheelchair ramp; no I don't charge them, they carry no purses or wallets, and I do not charge their masters. I've adjusted horses, cows, pigs, ducks, chickens, and cats -- any sick animal I can lay my hands on. And when I make farm calls, I do not even charge mileage. No charge to my friends -- the animals. And yes, Suzie no longer had epilepsy."

Certainly animals, too, deserve the benefits of chiropractic care. The profession finally must come to grips with the question of chiropractic care of animals. In La Crosse, Wisconsin, my good friend, Dr. John Turnbull, DVM, adjusts dogs, and both Dr. Turnbull and his partner, Dr. Hauser, have called me in on animal cases. One of my most interesting cases was a horse with traumatic torticollis, but that's another story.

In our quest for proof of the efficacy of our care, let us remember that kindness to all created things should be the hallmark of our profession. All of the major religions of the world speak to such matters. In our often paranoid quest to prove ourselves "scientific" to the so-called "scientific community," let us always remember that all healing is scientific, as it is the innate wisdom of the human body that heals. We need not follow the medical model to prove that fact to ourselves.

"Enuf" said.

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Fred H. Barge, D.C., Ph.C.
La Crosse, Wisconsin

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