



## Holistic Healthcare at the ARL

At the Animal Refuge League, we go to great lengths to ensure the health and wellbeing of animals in our care. Of course we use traditional western medicine, which focuses on treating symptoms and diseases using drugs or surgery; what you may not realize is that we also make use of a variety of holistic treatments for our animals, from Reiki to Bach Flower Essences, to low level laser therapy (LLLT).

Holistic medicine is the art and science of curing the whole individual – body, mind, and spirit. It integrates conventional and complementary therapies to promote optimal health, and prevent and treat disease by addressing contributing factors. Treatment methods which are least likely to do harm are used first. Read on for information on the many holistic measures we employ to keep our guest healthy and happy during their stay with us.

- Soft, classical music is played in areas where animals live to set a calming mood.
- Our animals drink reverse osmosis filtered water everyday. This ultra-clean water is ultra-safe. We also put Rescue Remedy, a Bach Flower Essence combination, in their drinking water, which helps reduce the stress our animals feel during their shelter stay.
- L-lysine, proenzymes, and fortiflora are added to our animals' morning meals to improve digestion and immune function, two bodily functions that often suffer in the stressful shelter environment.
- Bach Flower Essences, liquid tinctures made from flowers, trees, bushes, and special waters, help animals suffering from a variety of maladies. Pioneered by Dr. Edward Bach (1886-1936), who believed that negative emotions, such as fear and depression, are the real cause of disease, flower essences help balance and heal negative emotions, curing disease.
- We use acupuncture, homeopathy, and chiropractic for animals with more complex ailments. Dr. Ruth Dalto has been a strong advocate for these holistic therapies in the shelter. (Dr. Ruth Dalto 251 Main Street, Yarmouth ME 04096 [www.holistichealingforanimals.net](http://www.holistichealingforanimals.net))



- The ARL is fortunate to have the help of a volunteer Canine Rehabilitative Therapist who uses hands on therapeutic massage, ice/heat modalities, corrective exercise programs, and low level laser therapy (LLLT) to help shelter dogs. In LLLT, certain wavelengths of light are directed at an injured area to reduce pain and inflammation, and stimulate tissue growth and healing.
- Reiki, an energy healing treatment, works to alleviate pain, anxiety, depression, and stress, while supporting the physical healing process and increasing resistance and resilience to disease and illness. Dating back thousands of years to Tibetan spiritual practices, the word Reiki means “universal life energy” in Japanese, and is defined as being that power which acts and lives in all created matter. This energy, also known as Chi in China and Prana in India, plays an important role in our vitality and is the very foundation for all life. Reiki harnesses and channels this energy to help in healing. Often, an animal will exhibit dramatic improvement after only on treatment.



These holistic therapies have helped many animals overcome seemingly insurmountable obstacles on the path to new forever homes.