

Essences soothe
and restore
energy
balance.

Discover the power of flowers

Most holistically savvy dog owners know about **Bach flower essences**, a group of three dozen or so flower-distilled remedies.

The idea behind flower essences is that each plant has an energetic frequency. This vibrational footprint is captured by immersing the flower in water, exposing it to sunlight or moonlight, then creating a tincture with alcohol or another suitable preservative. When a person or animal is given the correct essence, it theoretically will bring the emotions into balance, and with that the body, as well. The key to using flower essences is to try and match the description of the essence with the emotional state of the animal.

The world of flower essences has expanded widely since the 1930s, when physician Edward Bach identified flowers from the British countryside that became the basis of his repertoire.

Today, flower essences are made from plants originating from Ireland to Bermuda. And a popular group, called Australian bush flower essences, taps the healing power of flora from Down Under.

"The flowers from which they are made grow in pristine and very ancient environments in Australia, which has some of the oldest geological sites in the world," says Ian White, a fifth-generation natural health practitioner who was the first to market Australian bush flower essences, ABFEs for short. "There is a strong spirituality in the Australian landscape, and essences made from the flowers in this region have tapped into this ancient, powerful energy."

White says ABFEs have a reputation for being quick acting and powerful. He attributes this energetic wallop to several things, among them the ancient nature of the continent's plants. Australia has many of the first flowering plants in the world, he notes, "as well as the highest number of flowering plant species."

Because flower essences work on an energetic level, the land's spiritual quality is crucial. "Australia has never experienced a war," White notes, "so it doesn't carry the energy of many hundreds and even thousands of years of conflict, as is the case in most other countries."

White says popular ABFEs for animals include Emergency Essence, sort of the Aussie answer to Bach's popular Rescue Remedy, for use in cases of shock or stress.

"Fear can be a big problem with many animals," White continues, noting that Grey Spider Orchid is useful for extreme terror, while Dog Rose can help fear related to shyness, as well as general apprehension. For dogs who challenge their owners as head of the pack, Red Helmet Orchid can aid in accepting authority.

As with all flower essences, ABFEs are safe. "They are self-adjusting, so it is impossible to overdose," White says. "If an essence isn't needed, then its energy will dissipate."

Regardless of their geographic origin, you can use flower essences with virtually any holistic and conventional treatment, including homeopathy and acupuncture. The worst reaction is no reaction at all. ☐

BY DENISE
FLAIM

Denise Flaim is a DOG FANCY contributing editor, the pets columnist at Newsday, and author of The Holistic Dog Book: Canine Care for the 21st Century (Howell, 2003). She lives on Long Island.