

# body & soul

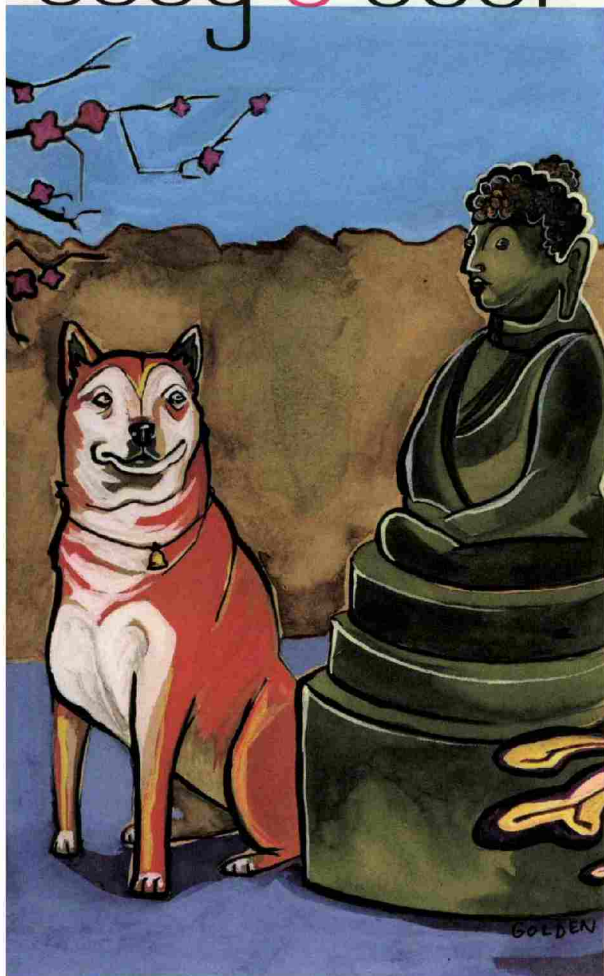


ILLUSTRATION JESS GOLDEN

## Herbs for Health

by Elizabeth Gardiner

Seeking natural remedies to some common canine ailments? Try these herbal cures, four pharmaceutical-free ways to good health—from relief for a troubled tummy to calming a nervous disposition.

For stress and anxiety, **Bach's Rescue Remedy** is often recommended for both human and canine stress and anxiety. Created by Dr. **Edward Bach** in the 1900s, the sworn-by calming blend is a mix of cherry plum, star-of-Bethlehem, rockrose, clematis, and impatiens.

Digestive aide **slippery elm** (*Ulmus fulva*) is one of the most commonly recommended herbs for digestive troubles. Its soothing mucilage properties promote healing of irritation and aid in smoothing the digestive tract. It is considered especially helpful for ulcers.

For arthritis, **yucca root** contains steroidal saponins and is considered a great pain reliever and anti-inflammatory. It is often recommended for arthritis because it reduces swelling of soft tissue and increases circulation in damaged tissue.

For allergies, **horsetail** (*Equisetum arvense*) has a high silica content which aids in the health of skin, bones, fur, and claws. Horsetail is also useful in treating urinary tract infections.

Herbal remedies can come in the form of liquids (teas, infusions, and extracts), ointments, dried, oils, and capsules. It's important to remember that reaction to the herbs can vary, so it's always a good idea to be alert to any side effects that might occur. In some dogs, herbal medicine may be quite effective while in others, not at all. It is also advisable to talk with your veterinarian before administering remedies.

Onlynaturalpet.com is a great source for herbal blends. For more on botanical medicine, see the Veterinary Botanical Medical Association's site, [vbma.org](http://vbma.org).

## Tension Tamers

1. Mozart may do it for you, but it's Schoenberger for your dog. At the request of Guide Dogs for the Blind, composer Thomas Schoenberger has recorded **songs to sooth** Scooter's soul. [thomasschoenberger.com](http://thomasschoenberger.com)
2. While deep tissue work should be reserved for professionals, there is nothing stopping you from calming Cody's nerves with a little **light massage**. Using soft slow strokes, gently massage behind the ears, under the chin, over the nose, down the shoulder, and back along the spine and shoulder blades. Don't be surprised if, when you are done, someone is fast asleep.
3. **Channel your Chihuahua's chi** by stimulating acupressure points along your friend's meridian to enhance circulation,

remove energy blockages, and release endorphins. Visit [animalacupressure.com](http://animalacupressure.com) for an overview of the practice.

4. Your pup already practices yoga every day, why not join him? Reclaim your four-leggedness and **stimulate the pranic flow** by working with your dog to stretch and de-stress. For poses and more information, go to [dogadog.com](http://dogadog.com).
5. Promote a sense of peace by rubbing blended essential oils into the palms of your hands and letting Winston sniff. Remember, less is more with the canine nose. Don't force the experience; he'll smell if he's interested and if it's pleasant for him. For a **tension-releasing tincture**, try a blend of lavender, peppermint, and valerian.

