

# Elk velvet antler - nature's answer to arthritis



Storm had to sit to eat because of hip dysplasia. Bruno couldn't climb the stairs anymore, and Pepples couldn't jump on the bed because of a ligament tear. Each of their guardians chose a natural treatment – elk velvet antler – over a chemical medication. All these animals are once again active and pain free.

by David W. Harper, BSc

Long used to improve human health and well being in traditional Chinese medicine, elk velvet antler is becoming recognized in the Western world as a safe and natural way to treat animals and humans suffering from arthritis and other muscular, bone or joint conditions. Elk antler, a nutritional food supplement, is a natural source of glucosamine (makes cartilage), chondroitin (elasticizes cartilage), collagen (supports bone and connective tissue), growth factors IGF/EGF (grows and repairs tissue), hyaluronic acid (lubricates), Omega 3 and 6 (for energy and endurance) and other nutrients. With these constituents and the fact that antler is the fastest growing mammalian tissue, it is easy to understand why it would benefit these conditions.

Research on the benefits of antler is being conducted in many areas including osteoporosis, wound healing (because of the growth factors) and tissue/organ regeneration (it has been proven to be a stem cell process). Elk velvet antler offers more benefits than simply easing inflammation; it actually helps

regenerate bone cartilage and muscle. Studies also note that it strengthens the immune system, improves blood circulation, increases energy and builds and tones muscle – all of which are an added bonus for your animal.

In February 2004, the *Canadian Veterinary Journal* published impressive scientific data from a clinical study in dogs conducted by the University of Montreal, Faculty of Veterinary Medicine. It concluded that “Elk Velvet Antler was effective in alleviating the condition in arthritic dogs... and resulted in a significant reduction of muscular atrophy.” It also recommended that it be considered in treating canine arthritis. Elk velvet antler is available through veterinarians, chiropractors and over the counter in animal and health food stores.

Antler is harvested from farmed elk. It is done annually using a drug free, painless tourniquet method developed in New Zealand with the cooperation of veterinarians, animal rights groups and government authorities. Antler is

a renewable resource, re-growing every year, with mature bulls growing upwards of 40 pounds of new antler in under 90 days. It is referred to as elk velvet antler because it is harvested at the stage of development when the velvet is still covering the antler, although it is the core of the antler, not the velvet, that is used in the product. In North America, farmed elk are generally free ranging in large pastures for the summer and fed hay during the winter.

Arthritis is a chronic, degenerative disease requiring ongoing treatment. If you are looking for a gentler, natural, holistic remedy for your animal, elk velvet antler might be the answer.

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