

VET INSIGHTS

Q & A

Dr. Keller, Landisville Animal Hospital

Laser Therapy

1. What is laser therapy and what is it used to treat?

High Power Laser Therapy is an exciting emerging treatment that relies on light energy to stimulate the healing process in damaged cells while also helping to decrease the sending and creation of pain signals in tissue. This is NOT the same as Laser Surgery, which uses focused lasers to actually cut and dissect tissue. Laser therapy has been shown to be beneficial in a variety of diseases and medical problems in both the human and veterinary fields. In both clinical studies and cases seen in our hospital, we have seen dramatic results in decreasing pain, speeding up healing times, and reducing inflammation.

2. Why would you recommend laser therapy over more traditional treatments?

The beauty of laser therapy is that it works as a stand-alone treatment but also works very well as an adjunctive or additional treatment with other therapies like pain medication and physical therapy.

However, it is of particular use when there might be medical reasons that other therapies such as pain medication might be dangerous, like cases of dogs or cats that are in liver or kidney failure.

3. What is the treatment process?

Fast, easy and painless! Actually, the laser produces a warming sensation on the skin (or fur!) that can help alleviate pain as well. Most machines have treatment protocols built in for specific problems and locations, and sizes of animals. For instance, the technician might select Stifle (knee), chronic musculoskeletal pain, and 70-80lbs for a Labrador with arthritic pain. The length of time and power of the laser is adjusted automatically for each patient and problem. Treatment usually takes between 3-20 minutes.

4. What are the risks of laser therapy?

There have been virtually no risks or contraindications of laser therapy noted in clinical trials or anecdotally in practice. Adequate eye protection, for technician or doctor, owner, and even "Doggles" for your dog or cat undergoing treatment are

required to prevent damage to the eyes of all involved. Dogs with confirmed cancer should be carefully screened as the laser stimulates cells and the healing process, but can stimulate growth of these cancer cells as well.

5. Which pets make the best candidates for laser therapy?

Almost any pet old or young that has pain, acute or chronic, or is dealing with an injury of any kind. Some specific cases we have noted great results with include chronic neck and back pain arising from disc issues (looking at you Dachshunds!), arthritic animals that haven't responded fully to other treatments, and animals that have had recent surgery or are recovering from a soft tissue injury (bruise, sprain, bite wound, etc.).



We do offer Laser Therapy here at Landisville Animal Hospital, but please consult your own veterinarian if Laser Therapy is an appropriate therapeutic option for your pet that may be in chronic pain or is recovering from an acute injury. For more info and testimonials, go to MyKLaserPet.com