

Under German pharmaceutical law, medicinal leeches are non-prescription medicinal products and are only available from pharmacies for private individuals. Online companies (except for online pharmacies) that are accessible to private individuals do not sell leeches as medicinal products or these may even be fake!

ADVERTISEMENT:



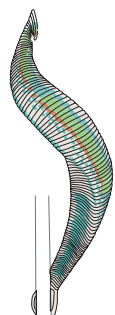
We train veterinarians and/or your veterinary assistants at our seminars so that you can include leech therapy in your range of services.

After attending a basic seminar, you'll be able to gain hands-on experience right away. Your knowledge of leeches for small animal and horse practices is consolidated in our advanced seminars.

THERAPISTS DATABASE

Therapists can choose to be added to a leech therapy database, making it easier for prospective patients to find you when searching for a local leech therapist.

www.leech.biz
(under Treatment/Therapist search)



*Over 20 years of innovation
in harmony with nature*

Biebertaler Blutegeizucht GmbH
Talweg 31 | D-35444 Biebertal
tel +49 6409 66140-0
blutegel@blutegel.de
www.blutegel.de

About the DGTHA:

The DGTHA is committed to bringing together all parties interested in leeches and their therapeutic use in the DGTHA, pooling the individual interests and working for a fair balance between the demands on leeches as medicinal products and their natural survival.

Membership information is available on the DGTHA website

www.dgtha.de

Submitted by:



DGTHA

Deutsche Gesellschaft zur Förderung
der Therapien mit Hirudineen und
ihres Artenschutzes e.V.

dgtha@dgtha.de
www.dgtha.de



DGTHA

Deutsche Gesellschaft zur Förderung
der Therapien mit Hirudineen und
ihres Artenschutzes e.V.

Information from DGTHA e.V.
on Hirudotherapy (leech therapy)
in large animals
(ungulates and cloven-hoofed animals)



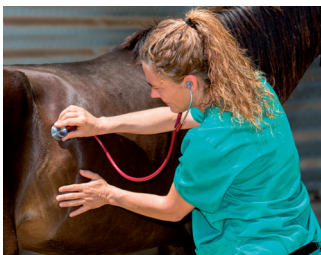
Information brochure
Version: November 2022

Leech therapy in
veterinary medicine

Leech therapy

Leech therapy is a traditional and recognised therapy for a range of human conditions. Since treating the symptoms of hobby and leisure animals is important to many of us, leech therapy is now increasingly being used to treat animals. In light of this, the DGTHA would like to inform you about the opportunities of leech therapy in horses/large animals.

Medicinal leeches contain a host of medically active substances in their saliva which are imparted into the bite wound as part of the suction process. The leech thus becomes a sort of organic pharmacy with substances that are also used in conventional medicines. However, the natural combination of a leech's substances is unique. Thanks to modern methods of analysis, many of the mechanisms involved in the saliva content of medicinal leeches have been researched over the past few decades. As a result, leeches have been categorised as medicinal products and are subject to the same safety, quality and efficacy requirements as all other substances subject to authorisation. The leech's substances increase local blood circulation at the point of attachment through anticoagulation and are particularly useful for reducing painful inflammation. Leech therapy can often also alleviate chronic diseases as a result of the heavily improved metabolic situation, providing a new opportunity for relief and healing.



Leeches can be effectively used for the following large animal conditions:

Horses, all ungulates and cloven-hoofed animals

- › Arthritis / Arthrosis (e.g. ringbone, spavin)
- › Hoof / cloven-hoof conditions (e.g. laminitis, mortellaro, white line disease, hoof cancer)
- › Ligament and tendon conditions (e.g. tendonitis and tenosynovitis, suspensory ligament inflammation, cruciate ligament conditions, luxating patella)
- › Galls (including windpuff, nuchal bursitis, etc.)
- › Navicular disease (podotrochlosis, podotrochlitis)
- › Spinal diseases (spondylosis, kissing spines)
- › Ataxias (issues with motor coordination)
- › Lumbago (equine exertional rhabdomyolysis)
- › Myogelosis (muscle hardening) and myalgia (muscle pain)
- › Pressure sores (saddle and harness sores)
- › Eczema (e.g. sweet itch, scurf)
- › Phlegmon (pus), abscesses
- › Mastitis (udder infections)
- › Wound healing disorders
- › Scar issues (including post-op)
- › Haematoma (bruising)
- › Venous diseases (thrombosis, thrombophlebitis)
- › Lymphangitis
- › Tooth and jaw diseases

What happens during leech therapy?

Your horse/large animal's treatment typically lasts between 60 and 90 minutes. One session is often sufficient depending on the condition being treated. To begin the treatment, a leech is placed on the affected site, attaches itself to it and then carefully pierces the skin with its 3 jaws. Since the leech's saliva contains an anaesthetic, this process is largely pain-free. During the next phase (15 to 90 minutes) the leech introduces its active substances into the tissue as it sucks, then eventually falls off by itself. Bleeding continues from the small bite wound

for 4 to 12 hours due to the Calin substance (saratin). The healing effect can then be seen after a certain amount of time, often immediately after finishing the treatment, and typically lasts for months.

How does your horse/large animal react to the leech bite?

Horses and large animals typically accept the leech bite without showing a defensive reaction and generally patiently tolerate the treatment. The healing effects of the leech bite have become firmly anchored in their instincts during the course of evolution. Many animals peacefully doze off during the treatment.

What follow-up treatment is required?

If contamination of the bleeding wound can be prevented, the wound can remain open.



What are the risks for your horse/large animal?

Undesirable side effects are very rare in animal leech therapy. Typical risks include wound infection and allergic reactions. Horses/large animals may also have conditions for which leech therapy is not suitable. The DGTHA therefore advises animal owners not to perform treatment on animals themselves.