


Natural healing

When Sara Senior's horse failed to respond to conventional treatment she called in animal aromatics expert Caroline Ingraham – with some dramatic results. Sara tells Kaiser's story



My horse Kaiser is a 16-year-old rescued 17.2 shire cross. Early on the morning of 3 September 2007 his right eye was running with clear fluid. This was the start of a long and nightmarish journey, but one that proved to be very educational and of unlimited value.

Our first step was to pick up some fucithalamic eye cream from the vet, returning at 7.30pm to administer it. By this time Kaiser's eye had become swollen shut and he was sweating profusely all over his body. Vet (1) was called and we were told to administer two pain killers (phenylbutazone). When Kaiser continued to sweat, the vet was called out again. However, he did not wish or was unable to come out in the night, so we called another vet (2), who administered buscopan and torbugesic.

Kaiser's vital signs were getting progressively worse, so vet 2 was called out again and re-administered the same drugs, after which Kaiser became ataxic and disorientated. The vet did not know why he was staggering and could do nothing more. An emergency equine vet (3), located an hour and a half away, came out at 4.30am and she thought it possible that the horse had received too much medication. By 6.30am Kaiser was in a relatively stable condition.

The following morning vet (1) came out to look at Kaiser's eye. No foreign body was found but a deep puncture wound to his eye was suspected, perhaps from a blackthorn bush where he scratches regularly. Kaiser was given more fucithalamic and atropine. Next, a large pocket of swelling was observed on the pectoral region of his chest. Vet 1 advised that this could be the result of an earlier injection but that it would dissipate.

However, the next morning Kaiser became ataxic (staggering) and experienced an ileus, causing all gut activity to cease. His symptoms included impaired swallowing (dysphagia), and changes in his faeces (slightly reduced volume and 'bolus' smaller in size.) This continued for about a week. The vet suspected 'grass

sickness' but significant symptoms of grass sickness failed to appear. Kaiser remained severely ataxic, dysphagic and faecal changes continued.

At this point the vet felt that Kaiser would not survive. Understanding the principles of animals seeking out medicinal remedies to heal themselves, I decided to call out animal aromatics expert Caroline Ingraham and hand the healing process over to Kaiser.

SELF-MEDICATION

During Caroline's visit Kaiser selected:

- 150ml St John's wort
- 200g wheat grass
- 2 drops of carrot seed essential oil
- 500g slices of Devil's claw

He took these remedies over a period of three hours. We were amazed to see that, almost immediately after ingesting the St John's wort, his coordination dysfunction was barely visible. (He had previously found great difficulty co-ordinating his feet or head, making walking, feeding or drinking almost impossible.) By 6pm Kaiser appeared relatively stable and by the morning all signs of ataxia, dysphagia, ataxia, and faecal abnormalities had disappeared. Kaiser continued to self-medicate with small amounts (approximately 20ml at a time) of St John's wort. This continued for three days until he eventually lost interest – by this time no signs of co-ordination dysfunction were apparent.

On 8 September the lump on Kaiser's chest had grown to the size of beach-ball. Vet 1 lanced it, saying that it was infected, and drained it. He prescribed a three-week treatment of Norodine (Trimethoprim and Sulfadiazine). No swab was taken.

Caroline advised applying powdered green clay since it had had a profound fast-acting effect on infected wounds with all species, describing how it prevented septicaemia on a young elephant calf in Kenya. Vet 1, however, did not want the clay in the wound. I didn't have a good feeling about the antibiotics, but panicked and decided to use both the antibiotics and the clay.



Left: A sick Kaiser, getting progressively worse. Right: Kaiser in glowing health after self-medication

Once the course of antibiotics was finished, a blood sample was taken since Kaiser was still 'not right.' He appeared to be lethargic, sleepy and depressed. He also had a rapid pulse rate that needed monitoring every three hours. It was diagnosed that the antibiotics had caused haemolytic anaemia. These had caused bone marrow to produce red blood cells, which the immune system consequently destroys. At this point the blood count was so low that a blood transfusion was suggested and steroids recommended (prednisolone).

However, by this point I had more faith in Kaiser's natural self-selection of remedies than in conventional treatments, so I decided to continue along this route, letting Kaiser lead the way. I called out Caroline Ingraham in the hope that she had a remedy that he would select to heal himself. When I informed the vet of my decision he was not impressed!

Kaiser chose rosehips, which he had rejected when he was suffering from coordination dysfunction. He was desperate for the rosehips and eager to consume up to 7kg a day – an incredibly large amount. However, to achieve the required results the animal must be allowed to dose itself.

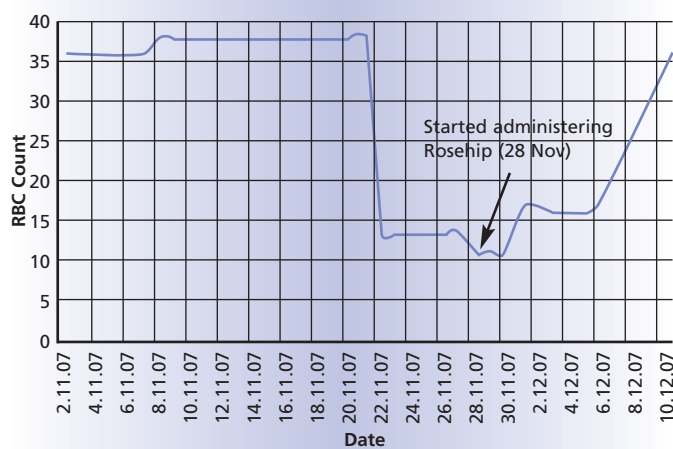
I had the blood count monitored every three days to see if it rose. Obviously, if the blood count had dropped then steroids would be have been considered.

CONCLUSION

The original problem was believed to be caused by a puncture to the eye by a blackthorn spike causing botulism toxin. This resulted in 'grass sickness' type symptoms having a direct effect on the neurological pathways and autonomic nervous system. St John's wort, noted for its effect on diseases and disorders of the nervous system, was selected. After ingesting 150ml in one afternoon almost all Kaiser's symptoms disappeared immediately.

Kaiser's blood count continued to rise steadily while he was on the rosehips, wheat and barley grasses. However, when I ran out of rosehips and had to wait for more stock to arrive, the blood count fell, only rising again when rosehips resumed (see Figure 1).

Figure 1: KAISER'S RBC COUNT



Kaiser took approximately 70kgs of rosehip and 50kgs of wheat and barley grass. By the end of this three-week period the blood count normalised and remained constant. The patchy sweating and increased heart rate also ceased. At this point Kaiser no longer wanted any further remedies.

I not only have anecdotal evidence that the oils and other natural plant remedies under the care and direction of Caroline's wealth of expertise saved my horse's life, but I also have veterinary blood analysis results (and results from blood samples sent to major Newmarket laboratories) to prove scientifically that the self-selection of natural remedies saved my horse's life.

Note: Plant remedies offered are secondary compounds which means animals would not select them as food. They are only selected if they are needed.