

Homeopathic treatment for aural hematoma in cat: Case report

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Abstract. Aural hematoma is defined by the accumulation of serosanguineous fluid within the ear pinna in small animals, typically stemming from traumatic incidents. Inadequate treatment may lead to recurring episodes and structural deformities in the patient's ear. In veterinary clinical practice, this condition exhibits a high incidence among dogs, but is relatively rare in cats. Conventional treatments employed for the physiological and aesthetic restoration of the affected area are typically invasive and often entail significant costs. Therefore, this article aims to present a case study involving a 15-year-old female mixed-breed feline diagnosed with an aural hematoma. The patient had previously undergone various forms of conventional treatment, none of which proved successful. Thus, a complementary treatment approach utilizing oral homeopathy was selected, as it represented the sole available option at that particular juncture. The homeopathic medicines were selected according to the law of similars. The treatment consisted of the following medications: *Arsenicum album* 30CH; *Bellis perennis* 30CH and *Rhus Toxicodendron* 30CH. After 20 days of treatment, the animal exhibited an ear pinna devoid of fluid accumulation and recurrence. The ear pinna was in excellent condition, except for the presence of scars along the ear, resulting in a residual deformation. Hence, homeopathic therapy holds significant promise as a therapeutic modality for managing aural hematomas in cats, obviating the necessity for invasive procedures. Under this perspective, this article represents one of the initial reports documenting such a treatment approach in feline cases.

Keywords: Aural hematoma, homeopathy, therapy

Tratamento homeopático para hematoma auricular em gato: Relato de caso

Resumo. O hematoma auricular é definido pelo acúmulo de líquido serossanguinolento no pavilhão auricular de pequenos animais, geralmente decorrente de incidentes traumáticos. O tratamento inadequado pode levar a episódios recorrentes e deformidades estruturais na orelha do paciente. Na prática clínica veterinária, esta condição apresenta alta incidência em cães, mas é, relativamente, rara em gatos. Os tratamentos convencionais empregados para a restauração fisiológica e estética da área afetada são invasivos e muitas vezes acarretam custos significativos. Portanto, este artigo tem como objetivo apresentar um estudo de caso envolvendo um felino, fêmea, sem raça definida, de 15 anos de idade, com diagnóstico de hematoma auricular. O paciente já havia sido submetido a várias formas de tratamento convencional, nenhuma das quais teve sucesso. Assim, foi selecionada uma abordagem complementar utilizando homeopatia oral, por representar a única opção disponível, naquele momento específico. Os medicamentos homeopáticos foram selecionados de acordo com a lei dos semelhantes. O regime de tratamento consistiu nos seguintes medicamentos: *Arsenicum album* 30CH, *Bellis perennis* 30CH e *Rhus toxicodendron* 30CH. Após 20 dias de tratamento, o animal apresentou pavilhão auricular desprovido de acúmulo de líquido e recidiva. O pavilhão auricular encontrava-se em excelente estado, exceto pela presença de cicatrizes ao longo da orelha, resultando em

deformação residual. Consequentemente, a terapia homeopática é uma importante ferramenta terapêutica o manejo de otohematoma em gatos, evitando a necessidade de procedimentos invasivos. Sob esta perspectiva, este artigo representa um dos primeiros relatos que documentam tal abordagem de tratamento em gatos.

Palavras-chave: Otohematoma, homeopatia, terapia

Tratamiento homeopático para el hematoma auditivo en gato: Reporte de caso

Resumen. El hematoma auditivo se define por la acumulación de líquido serosanguinolento dentro del pabellón auricular en animales pequeños, generalmente como resultado de incidentes traumáticos. Un tratamiento inadecuado puede provocar episodios recurrentes y deformidades estructurales en el oído del paciente. En la práctica clínica veterinaria, esta afección presenta una alta incidencia entre los perros, pero es relativamente rara en los gatos. Los tratamientos convencionales empleados para la restauración fisiológica y estética de la zona afectada suelen ser invasivos y a menudo conllevan costes importantes. Por ello, este artículo tiene como objetivo presentar un estudio de caso que involucra a una felina mestiza hembra de 15 años diagnosticada con un hematoma auditivo. El paciente había sido sometido previamente a diversos tratamientos convencionales, ninguno de los cuales tuvo éxito. Por lo tanto, se seleccionó un enfoque de tratamiento complementario que utilizaba la homeopatía oral, ya que representaba la única opción disponible en ese momento particular. Los medicamentos homeopáticos fueron seleccionados según la ley de similitudes. El régimen de tratamiento consistió en los siguientes medicamentos: *Arsenicum album* 30CH, *Bellis perennis* 30CH y *Rhus toxicodendron* 30CH. Después de 20 días de tratamiento, el animal presentaba un pabellón auricular sin acumulación de líquido ni recurrencia. El pabellón auricular se encontraba en excelentes condiciones, salvo por la presencia de cicatrices a lo largo de la oreja, lo que provocaba una deformación residual. Por lo tanto, la terapia homeopática es muy prometedora como modalidad terapéutica para el tratamiento de los hematomas auditivos en gatos, evitando la necesidad de procedimientos invasivos. Bajo esta perspectiva, este artículo representa uno de los informes iniciales que documentan dicho enfoque de tratamiento en casos felinos.

Palabras clave: Otohematoma, homeopatía, terapia

Introduction

Aural hematoma, alternatively referred to as otohematoma or Auricular Hematoma ([Silva et al., 2018](#); [Valle et al., 2015](#)), is a condition that can be described as highly prevalent among dogs ([Evangalista et al., 2012](#)). It is frequently encountered in veterinary clinical practice ([Valle & Carvalho, 2020](#)) and is characterized by the accumulation of serosanguineous fluid within the external ear of affected animals ([Evangalista et al., 2012](#)). However, it is rarely found in cats ([Silva et al., 2018](#)). This condition typically has a traumatic origin and can be associated with conditions affecting the auditory system, which may lead to sudden head movements due to pain, itching, or acute ear inflammation, including various forms of otitis ([Gheller et al., 2017](#); [Rodrigues et al., 2016](#)). It commonly results in severe itching in the affected area, often causing damage to the auricular cartilage, rupture and fracturing of blood vessels, thus creating conditions conducive to the accumulation of fluid ([Valle et al., 2015, 2020](#); [Valle & Carvalho, 2020](#)). Aural hematomas are generally self-limiting since they naturally progress towards fluid reabsorption and eventual healing. Consequently, this condition is characterized by its dynamic nature, wherein the body's processes play a crucial role in resolution. However, the disease resolution is slow, and fibrosis may occur in the healing process, which may lead to an increase in ear thickness and, as a result, deformation ([Krahwinkel, 2003](#)), especially when the condition is not adequately treated ([Valle et al., 2022](#)).

The diagnosis of aural hematoma is typically established through a clinical examination, which involves the identification of alterations in the ear pinna along with a thorough review of the patient's

clinical history ([Valle & Carvalho, 2021](#)). The patient's clinical history must be considered to identify and eliminate predisposing factors to the problem, preventing its recurrence ([Valle et al., 2015](#)). There are several types of treatment to obtain aural hematoma clinical improvement ([Valle et al., 2015, 2020](#)) with satisfactory variable results ([Silva et al., 2018](#)). Conventionally, the treatments performed for the physiological and aesthetic restoration of the ear are invasive, with surgical procedures being the most commonly utilized approach. However, the results are not always satisfactory ([Schossler et al., 2007](#)).

Within this context, it is crucial to consider gentle therapies, such as homeopathy, which aims to restore the body in a holistically. This article aimed to describe the case of a 15-year-old female cat diagnosed with recurrent aural hematoma, which had been previously treated conventionally but without success. Hence, a complementary treatment approach involving oral homeopathy was selected.

Material and methods

A 15-year-old female mixed-breed feline weighing 3.6 kg was seen at the Parchal Veterinary Clinic in Algarve, Portugal, in February 2023. The primary complaint was ear itching and an observed increase in the size of the right ear. After a physical examination, the patient was diagnosed with otitis, which was identified as the potential cause of the ear discomfort and the likely reason for the recurrent trauma. Subsequently, the contents within the ear pinna were promptly drained, amounting to 1 ml of blood. Following the drainage, 1 mL of prednisolone (25 mg) was administered at the affected site. On April 6, 2023, the animal revisited the clinic, and it was observed that the ear pinna had become more swollen. The owner disclosed that she had not used the previously prescribed conventional product (Abelia Glycozoo – for topical use) as directed. The ear was drained once more, and on this occasion, approximately 8 mL of serosanguineous fluid was extracted. Subsequently, 0.4 mL of Depo Medrol® (40 mg/mL) was administered. Compressive bandaging was attempted, but it proved to be unsuccessful. On April 13, 2023, the patient returned to the clinic as the ear had started bleeding due to a laceration caused by the animal's scratching. Following this incident, a surgical procedure was suggested. However, the owner declined to have the animal undergo surgery, opting to continue with home care that involved compressive bandages and draining the accumulated fluid as needed. On June 5, 2023, the animal returned to the clinic, and the ear was notably swollen ([Figure 1 – A and B](#)). A homeopathic protocol was then prescribed on that day comprising the following medicines: *Rhus tox* 30 CH, *Bellis perennis* 30 CH, and *Arsenicum album* 30CH. The dosage consisted of 3 globules to be administered twice daily for 30 days.

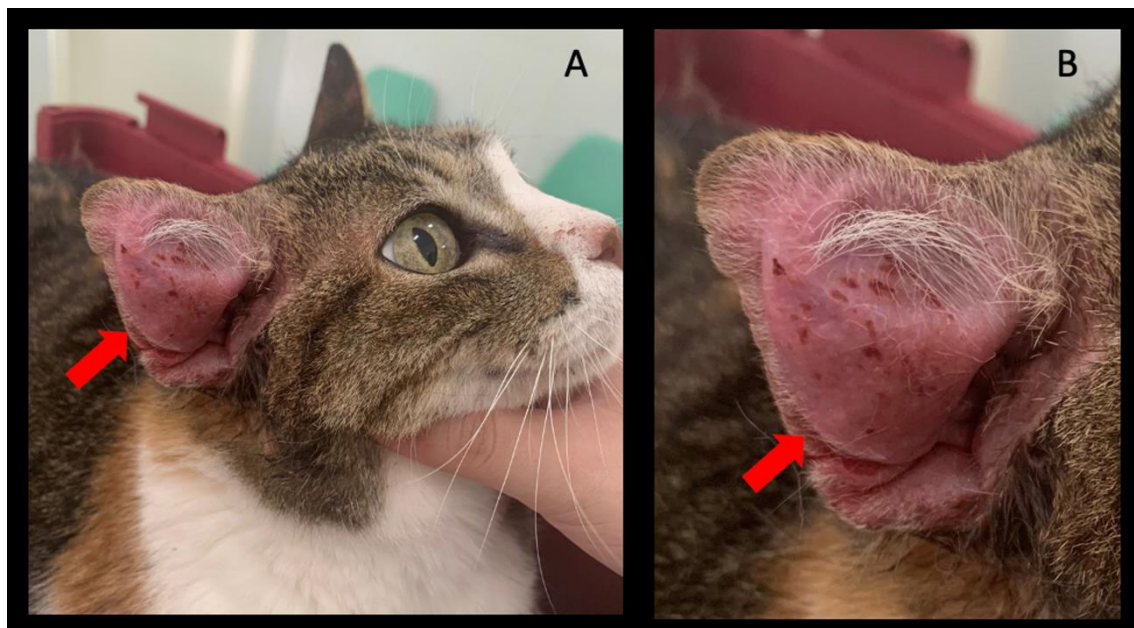


Figure 1. A. The red arrow indicates inflamed area of the ear pinna, displaying slightly ulcerated lesions, along with a substantial accumulation of fluid. B. A closer view of the lesion. The red arrow points to the inflamed area of the ear pinna, featuring slightly ulcerated lesions and a significant fluid buildup.

Results

After 20 days of treatment, the owner returned to the clinic for a scheduled routine follow-up. During the physical examination, it was noted that there was no longer an accumulation of fluid in the ear pinna. However, scars extending across the entire ear pinna were present, resulting in some localized deformation ([Figure 2](#)).



Figure 2. The red arrow indicates the ear pinna with the presence of scars, but with the aural hematoma process resolved.

Discussion

Aural hematoma is a common disease in conventional veterinary clinical routine, with reported prevalence data suggesting that, out of every 30 patients, at least one dog develops this pathology. The disease is characterized by the accumulation of blood content within the ear pinna, typically resulting from traumatic injury. It is more commonly observed in dogs and relatively rare in cats ([Rodrigues et al., 2016](#); [Silva et al., 2018](#)). However, new approaches are needed to treat this disease as an alternative to conventional methods. Therefore, complementary treatments, such as Homeopathy, emerge as promising alternatives. Homeopathy, a therapy with well-documented clinical efficacy supported by various authors over the years, has evolved into a significant therapeutic tool for numerous cases. Homeopathy is considered a safe therapeutic approach, especially when compared to the potential side effects associated with conventional medications ([Pires, 2005](#); [Santos, 2014](#); [Souza, 2002](#)). It does not suppress the body's natural biological and immunological responses, aids in maintaining homeostasis, and ultimately contributes to a sustained and significant improvement in disease management ([Valle et al., 2015](#)).

The initial treatment chosen for the reported case was conventional therapy. Nonetheless, no significant clinical improvement was observed, and recurrences became a recurring issue. Following several unsuccessful attempts with the conventional treatment, the patient commenced a homeopathic approach guided by the principle of the law of similar. This approach involved using diluted and potentized medications to address clinical signs or diseases that would manifest in a healthy person when exposed to these same substances in substantial doses ([Demarque et al., 2009](#)). This therapy facilitates the natural healing response of the organism, often referred to as the *Vis Medicatrix Naturae*, a concept introduced by Hippocrates around 400 BC. It supports the vital energy required for the complete restoration of the organism ([Valle et al., 2020](#); [Valle & Carvalho, 2020](#)). The selection of the medicines *Rhus tox*, *Arsenicum album*, and *Bellis perennis* was based on their anatomopathological similarity to the patient's condition. *Toxicodendron pubescens* P. Mill (*Anacardiaceae*), known in homeopathy as *Rhus toxicodendron* (*Rhus tox*), is used as an anti-inflammatory medicine. *B. perennis* is another medicine of plant origin known for its effectiveness in areas where there is an increase in volume and blood accumulation resulting from mechanical trauma ([Huh et al., 2013](#)). Meanwhile, *Arsenicum album* is a mineral-based medicine typically indicated for cases involving bleeding ([Costa et al., 2009](#); [Doehring & Sundrum, 2016](#); [Pereira, 2012](#); [Souza, 2002](#); [Vannier & Poirier, 1987](#)).

In a related context, [Reddy et al. \(1992\)](#) documented the treatment of seven dogs with otohematoma. The therapy involved a combination of the homeopathic medicines *Hamamelis virginiana*, *Bufo rana*, and *Arnica montana*, along with anti-inflammatory doses of corticosteroids and heparin ointment. Recovery occurred within a 7 to 23-day interval, with only one case of recurrence recorded.

According to [Valle et al. \(2015\)](#), the homeopathic treatment for aural hematoma is extremely effective when well prescribed and administered. Furthermore, these authors reported a case of aural hematoma in a Labrador-breed dog, which was successfully treated with homeopathy through daily oral administration of the medicines *Rhus tox*, *Bellis perenis*, and *Belladonna*. This treatment resulted in a rapid and effective resolution of the disease within 25 days, with no subsequent recurrences. In another study, [Valle et al. \(2020\)](#) reported the homeopathic treatment for an aural hematoma in a Labrador-breed dog. The disease was successfully resolved in 28 days, using injectable *Hamamelis virginiana*, *Arnica montana*, and *Arsenicum album*, in combination with daily oral administration of *Bellis perenis*. The therapeutic protocol used was conclusive, fully restoring the function of the external ear without any deformations of the affected tissue. Therefore, this treatment proved to be a valuable tool in treating this disease, obviating the necessity for invasive procedures and yielding excellent clinical outcomes.

More recently, [Valle et al. \(2023\)](#) published the first case report in the literature of aural hematoma in a mixed-breed cat that was treated using oral homeopathic therapy and reported excellent results. In the present case report, the patient had previously been diagnosed with aural hematoma and had undergone treatment with Conventional Medicine, but unfortunately, no positive results were achieved. From the beginning of treatment with homeopathic medication, the patient started to exhibit remarkable improvements, and no recurrence of blood sacs was observed in the ear pinna. Consequently, the patient displayed exceptional progress within a relatively short period. However, fibrosis was observed in the affected area, which was likely attributed to repeated attempts at conventional therapy that had yielded no positive response.

Thus, the present report corroborates the previously mentioned authors concerning the treatment of aural hematoma in small animals and validates the efficacy of homeopathic medicines in this therapeutic approach. It is worth highlighting that the patient was exclusively treated with homeopathic medicines, resulting in a swift initial recovery and scar formation up to 30 days after treatment initiation. Hence, homeopathic treatment emerges as an excellent alternative for aural hematoma treatment, aligning with what has been previously reported ([Valle et al., 2015, 2020](#)).

As emphasized by multiple authors, the optimal response to therapies for aural hematoma cases is closely linked to the timing of treatment initiation. Early treatment leads to better outcomes, reduced chances of recurrences, and a lower likelihood of ear pinna deformation ([Krahwinkel, 2003](#)) accompanied by scar formation. Clinical therapy can be recommended in most cases, and homeopathic medicines present themselves as an excellent alternative, eliminating the need for hematoma drainage or surgical procedures ([Busnardo et al., 2023](#); [Reddy et al., 1992](#); [Valle et al., 2015, 2020, 2022, 2023](#); [Valle & Carvalho, 2020, 2021](#); [Vannier & Poirier, 1987](#)).

Conclusion

The present case represents the second case report in the literature detailing the treatment of aural hematoma in cats using homeopathy, and the results here reported are remarkable. Consequently, the recorded results confirm the efficacy of the treatment applied.

This article was authored by Dr. Ana Catarina Viana Valle, who supervised the protocol, wrote, and reviewed the article. M.D.V. Filipa Fernandes was responsible for patient care and conducting the case, while Dr. Aloísio Cunha de Carvalho reviewed the article.

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