

# Releaf Massage Therapy

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Member, Associated Bodywork & Massage Professionals

## Healing Touch for Animals

### Energy Work for Our Companions

Lara Evans Bracciante

"I didn't know other people couldn't see energy until I was 30 years old," says Carol Komitor, creator of Healing Touch for Animals (HTA) and the Komitor Healing Method. This extraordinary ability to see energy fields has allowed her to help many people and pets, including Dakota, the 19-year-old quarter horse she's been working on this morning. "He had some blockages in his ankle. I used the laser technique to get things flowing again," Komitor says.

A veterinary technician turned massage therapist/Reiki Master/Healing Touch (for people) practitioner, Komitor's work with animals was a natural evolution. Because of her 13 years of experience as a vet tech, Komitor's

The inquiries became common enough that Komitor decided to develop a course to address the animal aspect of Healing Touch. "I originally thought it would be a couple of classes here in Denver," she says. "It's turned out to be an international program with multilevel certifications."

Today, instructors based across the United States and Canada travel to various cities worldwide presenting HTA weekend workshops to participants eager to connect with their animals. HTA is used to treat behavioral and physiological issues in companion pets and zoo animals. Those who have witnessed its effects are sold.

*"A healthy outside starts from the inside."*

-Robert Urich



Your furry best friend can benefit from bodywork too!

Healing Touch colleagues routinely sent the animal inquiries her way. "The chakra system is essentially the same in animals as it is in humans," she says, "but working with animal energy is different, because their energy fields are much bigger than ours, and they're more receptive. It's really important to blend our energy with theirs, so they are at ease."

### What is HTA?

This work on animals is a natural extension of Healing Touch (HT) for people, a method being used more frequently in hospitals and mainstream medical settings throughout the country. HT uses specific techniques to balance

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the chakra energies in and around the body, supporting the body in healing itself on physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual levels.

Before the work can really begin, Komitor explains that the facilitator must be grounded and clear, setting an atmosphere of energy presence. This taps you into the "unlimited energy outside of yourself," she says.

During a session, the facilitator uses one of several HTA techniques to specifically address a variety of issues. For example, the bridging technique is often used for animals that are scattered or fragmented due to illness, injury, or personality disorder. That technique balances and clears the energy field, bringing energetic wholeness into place. Komitor says HTA therapists have had great success working through everything from an animal's anxiety during thunderstorms to behavior issues, like tearing up the furniture.

## What Do the Animals Think?

During HTA techniques, animals ease into a relaxed, receptive state. Even in close quarters with a room full of strangers, all the canines involved in a weekend HTA course relaxed calmly at their owners' feet within minutes. When dogs receive an individual treatment, they yawn and maneuver to get more comfortable. Horses drop their heads and ears and cock a hind foot as if pondering sleep. Sometimes their lips quiver as if they were being tickled. Observers all note the obvious reactions, all positive, when the pets receive a treatment.

For the skeptics, Komitor gives a scientific premise to the healing benefits of HTA. All of the techniques create a relaxation response in animals, she says, and calming the animal initiates physiology that supports the immune system. "When an animal relaxes, the body releases chemicals in the brain, endorphins, that then allow the physical structure of the body to relax even more," Komitor says. "So muscles relax, the body has an ease with itself. And with relaxation, circulation increases, which accelerates blood flow and brings in oxygen, nutrients, adequate hormones, and enzymes to help with rejuvenation

of the cells. It also boosts the immune system."

While this relaxation response is no small thing, those who feel the energy and see its effects say something more is going on here. Komitor concedes: "Increased relaxation allows a surrendering of the body on all levels: spiritual, mental, and physical. This allows an environment that can connect with the self, with universe, with God, with nature, and creates wholeness."

## Making the Connection

Komitor believes animals may be particularly receptive to energetic benefits from their caring owners due to their ability to love unconditionally, without the type of psychic baggage humans carry in their electromagnetic fields. To this end, HTA has yet another side effect that all facilitators--those doing the work--are quick to mention:

The bond that develops between a human and the animal after working the techniques is especially profound.

Komitor also speaks to this. "Animals' instincts give them an awareness that we've long forgotten," she says. "If we attune to them and how they're relating to us, the connection that's meant to happen between the animal kingdom and humans is met. I've seen we are one, that all things in the universe are energy, just different molecular structures. And if we learn to relate as animals relate, we'd see we could connect."



Animals ease into a relaxed, receptive state and shed their stress.

# Keeping Your Back Healthy

## Tips to Avoid Lasting Pain

Chances are good that, at some point in your life, you will have back pain. In fact, 70-85 percent of Americans will experience back pain at some point in their lives. But even with those odds, there are still several ways to minimize your risk and give yourself the best chance to live pain-free.

Several factors can cause back pain, including stress, poor posture, bad ergonomics, lack of exercise, arthritis, osteoporosis, a sedentary lifestyle, overexertion, pregnancy, kidney stones, fibromyalgia, excess weight, and more.

With all of these potential causes lurking, it's important to look at behaviors that can help you prevent and avoid back pain before it starts. Here are a few simple healthy back tips from the National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke:

- Stretch and warm tissues before exercise or other strenuous activities.
- Practice good posture. Avoid

slouching when sitting or standing.

--When standing, keep your weight balanced on both feet.

--Follow good ergonomics in the workplace. When sitting for long periods of time, rest your feet on a foot support. Make sure your chair and work surfaces are at the proper height. Get up and move around in between long sitting stints.

--Avoid high-heeled shoes.

--Watch your weight. Excess weight, especially around the waist, can put undue stress on lower back muscles.

--Exercise. Core strengthening moves, especially, will also benefit your back.

--Don't lift items that are heavier than you can handle. Remember to lift with your knees, not your back. Pull in your stomach muscles, keep your head down and in line with your straight back, and do not twist when lifting.

--Get a massage. Using therapeutic bodywork can melt pain-inducing stress away from your back and the rest of your body.



**Massage is a great way to beat back pain.**

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# The Sunshine Vitamin

*Shelley Burns*

In the world of skin health, we focus on ways to improve skin quality. We work to prevent acne, cellular damage, dryness, and wrinkles. It is less common to discuss how a skin-care strategy may increase risk of developing other health conditions.

Skin cancer is one example. To prevent skin cancer, we protect ourselves with sunscreen--especially during the summer months. But by using sunscreen we are blocking the absorption of vitamin D, the "sunshine" vitamin.

Vitamin D is fat soluble and contains powerful antioxidant and anticarcinogenic properties that can prevent premature aging and cellular damage. Solid research indicates that vitamin D plays a role in reducing the risk of cancer, specifically breast, colon,

and prostate cancers. Vitamin D has been associated with preventing diabetes by reducing insulin sensitivity. It also improves heart health, reduces the risk of multiple sclerosis, strengthens bones, and decreases the effects of seasonal affective disorder.

Vitamin D can help resolve skin conditions like psoriasis, as it plays a role in skin cell regulation, including cell turnover and growth. Vitamin D can be effective in reducing the itching and flaking associated with this disorder. Ultraviolet B (UVB) treatments have long been used successfully in treating psoriasis because UVB produces vitamin D in the body.

Getting between 5-10 minutes of direct sun exposure daily on the arms, face, hands, and back (without sunscreen) can

provide enough vitamin D to meet your daily requirements, though sun exposure does present a risk. Because it is difficult to obtain enough vitamin D through food, many prefer to use supplements. Research on the health benefits of ingesting vitamin D led experts to advise an intake of 25-50 micrograms daily.

*Shelley Burns is a doctor of naturopathic medicine and completed studies at the Canadian College of Naturopathic Medicine. She has certification in complementary and integrative medicine from Harvard University.*

*"Your body  
hears everything  
your mind says."*

-Naomi Judd

Summer is my all time favorite. This year it feels even better to enjoy the simpler parts of life. I hope you all are taking time for yourself to do exactly what your body is calling for whether it be travel, bbqs with family, or solitude in massage :)

I am launching a new business that incorporates intuitive energy healing. You are welcome to follow along at [www.alignedalchemy.org](http://www.alignedalchemy.org).

Love & healing,  
Andrea Cain

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