

Aromatherapy for You and Your Animals

By Kristi Espineira

You may have experienced the effects of aromatherapy during a massage, when the therapist applies a scented oil to your muscles and a lovely aroma fills the air, immediately relaxing your body and calming your mind. It might surprise you to know that aromatherapy is not just beneficial to humans, but can also be used to treat animals for a variety of ills. It's no surprise to Frances Fitzgerald Cleveland. Frances, the owner of Frogworks, a Littleton-based aromatherapy company, has been working with horses for over twenty-three years, and in the past decade, she has been applying her knowledge of aromatherapy to her work with horses and other animals. At Kaeru Studio, a charming restored 1900's building on her horse facility, Outback Farm, Frances creates and produces all-natural essential oil blends for the physical and mental wellbeing of horses, dogs, cats, and, yes, even humans.

Aromatherapy is not a "New Age" fad; since ancient times, people have used aromatic oils for a variety of purposes. Modern aromatherapy has its roots in the early 1900's in France, when Dr. René Maurice Gattafausse coined the term to describe his work with essential oils. Essential oils result from the distillation or expression of plants and their parts, such as flowers, leaves, twigs, root, bark, or berries. These oils have varying degrees of healing qualities. Some are used for their antiseptic and bacterial properties, while others have anti-toxic and antiviral effects. Specific oils are believed to have specific therapeutic properties. For example, lavender can be used for relaxation or wound healing, while rosemary is beneficial for exhaustion or circulatory problems.

Frances, a riding instructor and certified aromatherapist, has combined her knowledge of essential oils with her love for animals to create products that have therapeutic benefits and undeniable healing powers. Drawing on the knowledge she gained in her studies with Caroline Ingraham, the pioneer of equine aromatherapy, Frances developed Pete's Equine Remedy. Frances created this remedy for her horse, Pete, who had a skin problem and subsequent rubbing damage on his tail. Within a few weeks of using this all-natural essential oil product, Pete's skin healed and his hair grew back. Another success story was Nadine, a quarter horse mare who had a severe skin problem that resembled sweet itch, with significant hair loss and a rash that extended from under her neck all the way to her belly. After two weeks of using Pete's Equine Remedy as well as several additional oils to treat Nadine's moodiness, Nadine's owner reported that her skin was completely healed, her hair was growing back, and, best of all, Nadine was back to her usual pleasant demeanor.

As with Pete's Equine Remedy, many of Frances' products arise out of a direct need in her life, and when she discusses the origins of her products, her passion for her work is evident. When her dog Jake was suffering from frequent hot spots, Frances developed Jake's Canine Remedy. This unique, all-natural product healed Jake's skin and has since

successfully treated many other dogs with skin problems such as bald spots, fungus, dermatitis, flea/tick bites, and small abrasions.

Aromatherapy is not only useful in treating skin conditions, but can also be effective in treating behavioral problems in animals. Frances has successfully used aromatherapy to treat atypical behaviors in horses, to help colts with weaning, and has even helped gorillas and orangutans at the Denver Zoo cope with the stress of captivity.

Frances' products are not just for animals. Anyone who has spent time working or playing outdoors in Colorado's extreme climate can understand the need for soothing remedies for the skin. Kaeru Facial Mist rejuvenates and nourishes the skin, and was designed as a convenient skin freshener to spray on after riding, swimming or gardening. Too Much Sun helps relieve the pain of sunburn, promotes healing, and repairs and prevents sun damage – common concerns for Coloradoans who love the outdoors.

In addition to her line of products, available through her online store, Frances provides individual consultations to develop custom blends of essential oils tailored specifically for you or your animal. All of FrogWorks' oils are pure, organic, ecologically grown and carefully wild-crafted. Frances can be contacted at (303) 973-8848 or through her website, <http://www.ffrogworks.com>.