

Canadian Animal Chiropractic/Veterinary Spinal Manipulative Therapy (VSMT) Program

A. Complete Course Hours

The Basic program consists of a minimum of 220 hours of post-graduate education to licensed chiropractors and veterinarians only. The curriculum is approved by both the American Veterinary Chiropractic Association (AVCA) and the College of Animal Chiropractors (CoAC).

B. Educational Curriculum

The Core Curriculum is as follows:

SUBJECT	DETAIL	HOURS
Anatomy	All pertinent aspects of osteology, myology, and syndesmology, of predominantly the canine and equine species, are covered in detail in this section as it applies to veterinary spinal manipulative therapy. Normal biomechanics and range of motion of each body region are covered as well as all relevant joints. This section includes special areas of interest such as the Stomatognathic system and the stay apparatus in horses. Content is presented in both lecture format and through hands-on muscle dissection and bone lab time.	18
Biomechanics	This section further explores the biomechanical changes that occur when the body performs both normal and abnormal movements as well as identifying pathophysiologic changes that can occur when the body compensates for pain or dysfunction both statically (posture) and dynamically (in motion). Saddle fit and gait analyses (in both species) are included under this section as well as assessing for soundness and identifying when a veterinary referral or concurrent care is indicated.	6
Neurology (Basic & Advanced)	An essential part of animal chiropractic and VSMT is the understanding of what happens at a neurologic level when mechanical joint dysfunction exists and what happens when an adjustment is performed. Topics covered during these lectures include: neuron anatomy and signaling, the central nervous system, peripheral nervous system and its specialized MSK receptors, and the autonomic nervous system as they relate to chiropractic/VSMT. Other topics include the cranial nerves, the brachial and lumbar plexuses and spinal cord anatomy and its tracts. The neurologic mechanisms by which VSMT causes changes at various neuroanatomical levels is discussed in depth.	18
Chiropractic Sciences	This section includes topics such as chiropractic terminology, definitions, concepts and normal joint ranges of movement. A brief overview of chiropractic history and philosophy is explored as well as various vertebral subluxation theories and models. Chiropractic research is presented including common musculoskeletal conditions that are well managed with chiropractic care and mechanisms of action. These lectures further expand knowledge of functional neurology and how it relates to mechanical joint dysfunction/ vertebral subluxation complex (VSC).	15



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Veterinary Sciences	These lectures include topics such as safety when working with animals, basic veterinary pharmacology, physiology, dentistry, and animal diseases (infectious and zoonotic). Other topics include: pathologies found in the cervical, thoracolumbar, sacropelvic and extremity regions; highlighting indications and contraindications to care as well as when concurrent care is beneficial. The veterinary neurological and cranial nerve exam is covered both in lecture and lab format, as well as lameness basics for the animal chiropractor to successfully identify what conditions respond well to chiropractic care and when a veterinary referral is warranted. Veterinary radiography is incorporated in this section comparing normal vs abnormal findings. Emphasis is placed on conditions encountered daily in practice.	18
Ethics and Legalities	This section informs and prepares students to prevent/manage potential legal issues that can occur in conventional and complementary practice setting. Reviewing scope of practice, standards of care, red flags and indications/contraindications to VSMT and when and how to refer is discussed. Emphasis is placed on good communication, educating clients and other health care professionals, and forming collaborative relationships between the professions.	4
Rehabilitation Therapy	These lectures provide information (including lab time) demonstrating various exercise and stretching techniques, common rehab equipment used, and various treatment options available to pet owners that may support the chiropractic care they receive. Various hands-on techniques are demonstrated and performed that can facilitate an animal's recovery by strengthening and stabilizing pertinent musculoskeletal structures and tissues providing optimal healing and balance.	8
Complementary Therapies/ Auxiliary Chiropractic Modalities	This section builds upon existing knowledge and provides practitioner's information on pertinent aspects of the use of auxiliary chiropractic therapies. Information such as theory, mode of action, common conditions used, and indications/contraindications to use is explored with each modality. Examples of complementary modalities covered include: acupuncture, LASER, electrical muscle stimulation, therapeutic ultrasound, PEMF, hydrotherapy and manual techniques such as massage and acupressure etc.	5
Animal Chiropractic/ VSMT Techniques Lecture	Basic animal chiropractic adjusting techniques are taught and demonstrated visually and with bone specimens. Regions of the body covered in detail are: the cervical, thoracic, and lumbar spine, the sacro-pelvis, ribs, sternum, TMJ, and the thoracic and pelvic limbs of both the canine and equine species. Pertinent soft tissue techniques (including Logan Basic) and traction techniques are also covered.	19
Animal Chiropractic/ VSMT Techniques Laboratory (Hands-on)	This lab time is structured in small group format with a mix of both DC's and DVM's in each group and is used to practice and master techniques taught at the basic adjusting technique level. Both small and large animals are available for application. Live gait analysis demonstrations are performed and taught for both species to assess and determine altered biomechanics. In module II, students begin working a case (intake, examine, adjust, reassess) in a clinical setting which is later presented to class. Students practice 'thrusting' on toggle-boards and practice adjustment set-ups before adjusting demo dogs/horses with an instructor present. Various soft tissue techniques are also covered in lab.	93
Case Presentations	Each student will present a case to the class via power point format in which they have utilized animal chiropractic care. They must record the animal's signalment and history, explain the rationale behind their diagnosis, list differential diagnoses, and outline the treatment plan, include chiropractic and medical findings and any client	8



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	instructions/recommendations given. Pictures and video should support the presentation including gait analysis. The students' case of choice will be reviewed on an ongoing basis by the instructing team at each module.	
Adjunct Veterinary/Chiropractic Diagnosis	This class will demonstrate, with an emphasis on the chiropractic diagnosis of musculoskeletal conditions, using a case management approach. Ideas and standard-operating procedures are provided so case intake and expected progress is familiar to students and proper therapeutic protocols and expected outcomes are achieved.	8
TOTAL HOURS		220