

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 for licensed chiropractors and veterinarians only. The curriculum is approved by the American Veterinary Chiropractic Association (AVCA).

B. Educational Curriculum,

The Core Curriculum, is as follows:

SUBJECT	DETAIL	HOURS
Anatomy	All pertinent aspects of osteology, myology, and syndesmology, 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, including 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 lecture format and hands-on muscle dissection and bone lab time.	18
Biomechanics	This section further explores the biomechanical changes that occur when the body performs normal and abnormal movements and identifies pathophysiologic changes 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 mechanical and neurophysiological level when joint dysfunction exists and when an adjustment is performed. These lectures cover neuron anatomy and signalling, the central nervous system, the peripheral nervous system and specialized receptors, and the autonomic nervous system related to chiropractic/VSMT. Other topics include cranial nerves, brachial and lumbar plexuses, spinal cord anatomy, and spinal tracts. The neurologic mechanisms by which VSMT is proposed to cause changes at various neuroanatomical levels are discussed in depth.	18
Chiropractic Sciences	This section includes chiropractic terminology, definitions, concepts and normal joint ranges of movement. A brief overview of chiropractic history and philosophy is explored, including various vertebral subluxation theories and models. Relevant human and animal chiropractic research is presented and discussed, including common musculoskeletal conditions commonly managed with chiropractic care. These lectures further expand on knowledge of neurology and how it relates to mechanical joint dysfunction/ vertebral subluxation complex (VSC).	15



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Veterinary Sciences	These lectures include safety when working with animals, basic veterinary pharmacology, physiology, dentistry, and animal diseases (infectious and zoonotic) related to chiropractic practice. Other topics include pathologies of the cervical, thoracolumbar, sacropelvic and extremity regions. Each section highlights indications and contraindications to care and when concurrent care is beneficial to the patient. The veterinary neurological and cranial nerve exam are covered in lecture and lab format and lameness basics for the animal chiropractor to 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 in conventional and complementary practice settings. 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 facilitating 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 to 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, therapeutic 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 sacropelvis, 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 a small group format with a mix of DCs and DVMs 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 introduced to assess and determine altered biomechanics for both species. In module II, students begin working on a case (intake, examine, adjust, reassess) in a clinical setting which is later presented to the 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 the lab.	93
Case Presentation	Each student must present a case to the class via PowerPoint format in which they have utilized animal chiropractic care. They must record the animal's signalment and history, explain the rationale behind their diagnosis/clinical impression, list differential	8



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	diagnoses, and outline the treatment plan, including chiropractic and medical findings and any client instructions/recommendations. 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.	
Research Article Presentation	Each student must read, summarize, and prepare a class presentation in PowerPoint format discussing a relevant chiropractic research paper's objectives, methods, outcome parameters and main findings including any limitations. Students should be able to answer class questions regarding their assigned article and be able to communicate their key takeaways from the article.	5
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 are familiar to students and proper therapeutic protocols and expected outcomes are achieved.	8
TOTAL HOURS		225