

## Colostrum & Pets:

An Interview with Steven R. Blake, DVM

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**Q: How long have you been a veterinarian and what brought you to alternative medicine?**

**A:** I've been practicing veterinarian medicine for over twenty-five years, and I've spent the past twenty years practicing alternative forms of medicine. My reason for choosing alternative medicine is because of my own ill health as a result of pesticides I used on the animals. The pesticides on the animals and in my clinic were making me ill, and my doctor recommended I quit or suffer an early death. I decided that I would stop using pesticides and refuse to see any animals using chemicals. At the time, my feeling was that if all my clients left, I would quit the practice of veterinary medicine.

**Q: You're still in business, so how has your practice changed?**

**A:** Well, after twenty years I am still here, busier than ever and doing what I love to do -- caring for animals. I realized I needed to learn other modalities in order to care for the animals and not harm them. "To do no harm" is what I've been working so hard to provide my patients by using products and modalities which have no toxic effects. My special interests have been in classical homeopathy, acupuncture, nutrition, glandular therapy, aromatherapy, Bach flowers and massage. I've used these methods in everything from a mouse to an elephant, and I've found that they work in all species equally well.

**Q: How did you learn about colostrum and what made you a believer?**

**A:** I had known about colostrum for nearly thirty years, but had never thought about as something I would use in my general practice. I was "re-introduced" to colostrum by a colleague and the rest is history, so to speak. Colostrum is the pre-milk produced by all mammals during the first two

days after giving birth to their young, and many species will die if they do not get this essential nutrient within the first few days after birth. It's really that important. Colostrum contains all the immune factors necessary to protect and build the immune system, and it provides all of the growth factors that the body needs to develop and repair itself. One interesting fact I came across was that the bovine is the only species that is a universal donor for colostrum. This means that all mammals can benefit from bovine colostrum. Colostrum research is so extensive that one could spend many years just reading all the data that has been gathered on the subject. The use of colostrum in medicine goes back thousands of years, and its uses are well documented throughout history.

**Q: What is the rationale for using colostrum in your practice?**

**A:** As animals age, there is a decrease in their ability to produce immune factors and growth factors, resulting in an increase in disease, both acute and chronic. The toxic environment we live in is also contributing to the ill health of animals. Colostrum aids the body by strengthening the intestinal tract so that these toxins are not allowed into the body. It's been well documented that over ninety percent of all toxins, viruses, bacteria, parasites and yeast are absorbed through the gut wall. This is referred to as Leaky Gut Syndrome and accounts for most every disease condition. By strengthening the gastrointestinal tract, we potentially could eliminate over ninety percent of all diseases, and this one fact is what got me so interested in this particular nutritional supplement.

**Q: Were you ever a skeptic?**

**A:** Being the skeptic that I am, I found myself saying, "it just sounds too good to be true."

I was very skeptical that colostrum would not meet my expectations, even though I had done a great deal of research. The research that I had found was overwhelming in volume and the studies had come from all over the world. So as always, I tried colostrum on myself and my family. My rule has always been that if it isn't safe for me, it isn't safe for my patients. I was amazed at how much better my eleven-year-old basset hound Elmo and I felt. His cataracts of seven years began to clear and his arthritis improved dramatically. Genetic disease is synonymous with basset hounds, which makes the appearance of cataracts, glaucoma, and arthritis very common. To see him improve in this area was heartwarming. My excitement also came from the knowledge that he had been on a natural diet, filtered water, classical homeopathic care, aromatherapy, no pesticides and glandular therapy and that by adding only the colostrum it improved even more, allowing me to cut back on his natural therapy.

**Q: Why does colostrum work better than herbal remedies?**

A: The beauty of colostrum, in comparison to herbs and other plant supplements, is that plants do not have immune factors and growth factors that mammals have. Colostrum contains lactoferrin, lactoperoxidase, lysozymes, immunoglobulins and proline-rich polypeptides (PRPs) which plants do not contain. All of these powerful immune factors in colostrum can kill harmful bacteria, viruses, parasites, fungus and destroy toxins. It can help with autoimmune conditions due to the presence of PRPs which are small peptides. It controls the thymus gland which is the master gland for the immune system. It helps boost an underactive thymus and reduces a hyperactive one. The hyperactive one would be in cases of autoimmune diseases such as lupus, chronic allergies and rheumatoid arthritis. The growth factors in colostrum help bone growth, skin healing, gums, gastrointestinal problems, ulcers, gas, skin tone and elasticity and help with the balancing of neurotransmitters which affect pets' moods. All of these benefits without any side effects and the possibility of helping our pets lead happier, healthier lives just isn't possible with plant-based products.

**Q: What has been your patients' response?**

A: As I started using colostrum more and more in my patients, I started hearing all of the good results my clients were getting. I've seen countless dogs with chronic allergic conditions who had been prescribed prednisone and essentially had no energy to play. After taking bovine colostrum, their allergies disappeared and they returned to their normal active selves.

I have used colostrum topically on surgical and non-surgical wounds, and seen them heal fifty percent faster than with antibiotics or calendula. I mix the colostrum powder with a small amount of water and then have the owner massage it into their pet's skin one to four times per day as needed. I also pack the powder into abscesses after cleaning them, and they heal in three days, without antibiotics. For very ill pets, I have gavage them (fed via a tube) with a liquid colostrum (a blended mixture of the powder and water), and seen them regain their strength at a maximum potential of healing.

Dogs who have picky appetites begin to eat better while taking colostrum because their gastrointestinal systems are working more efficiently. With a healthier gut, there is less inflammation and discomfort with eating. I treat all acute and chronic diarrheas with colostrum and find that within three days or less, these pets are back to their normal diets.

Just like humans, many pets experience the discomforts of arthritis as they age. When glucosamine sulfate isn't working as well as it did, I mix the colostrum with the glucosamine, and arthritic animals begin to respond again.

**Q: What oral dosages and timing do you recommend?**

A: I have found that the most effective way to use colostrum is to feed the powdered colostrum either dry or with an

ounce of water at least one-half hour before feeding. So far, all dogs and cats I've used this method with love it. I recommend the powder which is dosed at 1/3 teaspoon per 25 pounds of weight. I suggest pets be given colostrum the first thing in the morning. Wait thirty minutes and then feed as usual. If you do not get any results in three days time, increase the dose by 1/3 teaspoon for up to three days until your pet shows improvement. I recommend you stop increasing at this point and stay at this dose until they are well. Then start cutting back until you reach a point where you are comfortable with their health. This is an excellent preventative nutritional supplement which can potentially aid both the gastrointestinal and growth factor dependent aspects of healing the body.

**Q: What do you recommend for topical application?**

A: Colostrum can be applied topically. Dilute powder in water and apply to skin or dab a small amount of powder directly. Of all the natural products I have tried for wounds, rashes, hot spots and psoriasis, this is the best I've ever seen. It has the potential for reducing healing time by fifty percent. I put warm water in my hands and a small dab of the powder together and massage the diluted colostrum in the areas of inflammation. I do this three to four times a day depending on the response of the animal.

**Q: Are all colostrum products on the market the same?**

A: I discovered that all colostrum is not equal in terms of immune and growth factor content, and this is problematic for achieving results. The best colostrum comes from dairy cows who are pasture-fed, no hormones, no antibiotics, no pesticides and are not raised on dead food. Colostrum from sources that do not meet these qualifications runs the risk of (1) not providing the potential nutritional support colostrum is capable of providing and (2) containing toxic substances which actually harm the animals. Contaminated cows mean contaminated colostrum. Cows raised on live food (grass) get all of the live enzymes necessary to increase the enzyme-rich colostrum which grain fed cows cannot provide. Additionally, processing of the colostrum can affect the bioavailability of the product and reduce or destroy its effectiveness completely. Both heat and freezing can do this, so consumers must be aware of what they are buying. I recommend you check directly with the manufacturer.

**Q: Do you have any final comments?**

A: I have found that bovine colostrum complements any other medical modality whether it is conventional or alternative. Colostrum is essential for repairing the body and establishing homeostasis in our beloved pets. Pets bring us immense joy, and it's our responsibility to care for them with the most non-toxic modalities we can.

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