

# Time to spice up your dog's life

YOU may not be able to teach old dogs new tricks, but you can improve their health with a new breed of alternative medicine.

That is the claim of many pet owners who have switched from conventional medicines to herbal remedies to cure their dogs' previously intractable complaints, such as arthritic and skin conditions.

Michael Brookman, 63, a herbalist from Cornwall, stumbled on to the idea of prescribing herbs for pets. A patient asked if the remedies, which had proved so effective curing his own circulatory problems, could help Tommy, his ailing, arthritic Labrador.

Brookman says: "The response to the herbs I made up for Tommy, who was virtually unable to walk, was so quick. He was soon jumping into the back of the estate car for his daily walks."

It was the delight and encouragement of Tommy's owner, Channel Islander Leslie Wells, which persuaded Brookman to investigate the potential of herbal remedies for animals.

Thus began a series of experiments with sick dogs. Michael prepared formulae combining many herbs with seaweed, alfalfa, dandelion, wild yam and aniseed. A success rate of 70 per cent, gave birth to a range of products which Brookman branded Kai. The name Kai is Maori for food and akin to the Chinese character, Chi, which means "life energy". Brookman also makes up remedies for less common complaints.

Vet  
Richard  
Allport, of  
the Natur-

## SELF HEALING



By Mark Winter

al Medicine Veterinary Centre in Potters Bar, has no doubt about the effectiveness of herbal cures for animals. He says: "Animals have a kind of self-knowledge, which we have lost, that makes them go out to look for herbs that will cure their ailments."

Something most dog owners can confirm.

Allport says: "Many of our modern medicines are derived from plants. In the right combinations, herbs without doubt have a proven effect on animals."

Jackie Morgan from South Killingholme, Lincolnshire, agrees. Her dog Max started on herbs at the tender age of 15 to alleviate symptoms of a painful brain tumour. Beyond expectation, Max, now 17, went into remission and has been barking at the postman ever since. Not to mention enjoying trips to the pub for a small Guinness.

Cats also respond to herbal therapy. Judith Chisholm from Glengarriff, West Cork, Ireland, was losing her Siamese cat, ET, to leukaemia, when she started him on a course of herbal mixtures. Far from "gradually fading away" as predicted by her vet, ET made a surprising recovery.

Brookman says his herbs are combined with a healthy diet of raw meat and raw pulped vegetables. "From experience I have recognised that the repetitive use of mass-produced food cannot foster health. There's no such thing as a short cut to good health," he says.



## Birthday words...

*"I know that I shall meet my fate | Somewhere among the clouds above | Those that I fight I do not hate | Those that I guard I do not love"* - From An Irish Airman Foresees His Death.

*"No man has ever lived that had enough | Of children's gratitude or woman's love"* - From Vacillation. William Butler Yeats, born this day in 1865.