🐾 Acupuncture (Dry Needling) for Dogs 🐾

What Is Acupuncture & How Does It Work?

Acupuncture, also known as **dry needling**, is a therapeutic technique that involves placing very fine, sterile needles into specific points on the body to help relieve pain and inflammation and support healing.

In veterinary medicine, dry needling is commonly used to assist with **musculoskeletal pain, neurological conditions, and chronic inflammation**. It works by stimulating the body's natural pain-modulating and healing mechanisms, making it a valuable part of **multimodal pain management**.

While acupuncture has Traditional Chinese Medicine origins, modern research supports its effects on the **nervous system, circulation, and tissue healing**. The needles activate:

- **Local blood flow** to support healing
- **Release of endorphins** (natural pain-relieving chemicals)
- **Muscle relaxation**, especially in trigger points
- **Reduction of nerve hypersensitivity**
- **Improved communication** between nerves and muscles

Common Conditions Treated

Dry needling is used as part of an integrated treatment plan for dogs with:

- **Osteoarthritis / Degenerative joint disease**
- **Hip or elbow dysplasia**
- **Intervertebral disc disease (IVDD)**
- **Muscle tightness or spasms**
- **Neurological conditions** (e.g. nerve injury, weakness, paralysis)
- **Post-surgical recovery** (orthopaedic and spinal)
- **Chronic pain** or stiffness
- **Reduced mobility in senior dogs**

Part of a Multimodal Pain Relief Plan

Acupuncture is most effective when used alongside other therapies, such as:

- **Anti-inflammatory or pain-relief medications**
- **Physiotherapy and rehabilitation exercises**
- **Laser therapy, hydrotherapy, or physiotherapy**
- **Weight management and joint supplements**

What Happens in a Session?

- **Initial Assessment:** We will begin with a full physical exam and evaluation of the patient's condition.
- **Treatment:** Fine needles are inserted into specific points relevant to the patient's condition.
- **Duration:** A session usually lasts **20–30 minutes**.
- **Frequency:** Often weekly to start, then spaced out as improvement occurs.