

**Hope for Healing
Liver Disease
In Your Dog**

by Cyndi Smasal

Forward by Deb Forster, B.S., D.V.M.

This book is dedicated to my companion, best friend and dog Norman.

Material for this book has been compiled from books I have read, articles I found on the Internet, and trial and error. I have made every effort to credit my sources. If I have made any omissions, I will gladly make the correction once it is made known to me.

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Foreword

By Deb Forster, B.S., D.V.M.

“This is vital information that needs to be available for every pet-lover who has a dog with liver disease.”

In my 20 plus years as a veterinary practitioner, I’ve treated many cases of liver disease, and I’ve followed both conventional and alternative methods of healing. In these pages, Cyndi Smasal has compiled an excellent guide to help treat liver disease in dogs, our best friends and companions. And, it’s in a great format that will allow readers to download it off the World Wide Web.

I started working with Cyndi and Norman four months into her alternative treatment. I’ve never met a more dedicated pet owner. She became a student and now a teacher of alternative veterinary medicine, nutrition, supplements and homeopathic remedies. I have personally seen Norman benefit from her loving care, homemade dog food and nutritional supplements.

The concept of a special diet for liver disease is not a novel one. But in this book, Cyndi addresses the topic from a very personal and truthful level. She has tried everything that could possibly be helpful for her dog, much more than what she’s listed in these pages. She’s put all the results of her research into an easy to read, concise book that fills a tremendous need in the pet-lover community.

You will find her determination inspiring in addition to solid information about a complex disease. This book is by no means the answer to all of your dog’s needs, but it provides a great start for treating your dog with liver disease in collaboration with a qualified veterinarian.

This is vital information that needs to be available for every pet-lover who has a dog with liver disease.

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A Note of Caution

The material in this book has been written for educational purposes ONLY. It should not be regarded as veterinary medical advice. I am not a veterinarian. Please consult with a Doctor of Veterinary Medicine or a holistic veterinarian before applying what you learn from this book.

My approach to treating liver disease is considered to be alternative by definition. My approach has not been investigated or approved by any regulatory agency. Do not use this book as a substitute for treatment by a veterinarian. Rather, use this information in conjunction with veterinary care. Always discuss the use of alternative approaches like this one with your veterinarian before trying them.

I did not receive an enthusiastic response from my first veterinarian when I discussed this approach. So, you may want to consult with more than one veterinarian regarding the treatment that is best for your dog.

Ultimately, you are responsible for the care and treatment that your dog receives. I am not responsible for any adverse reactions or effects resulting from the use of the information contained in this book.

Introduction

By Donna M. Hilbig, M.Ed., L.P.C.

I have been privileged to witness the events described in this book, because of my acquaintances with both the author and Norman, the spunky Cocker Spaniel upon whom this book is based. In the following pages you, too, will sense the depths of the relationship between this dog and his human. From the beginning, it was obvious that he claimed her heart, and they belong to one another.

Being a “cat person,” it was a foreign concept to hear someone say they have to go straight home after work, “because Norman is by himself.” Seeing a dog sit and sleep in a person’s lap in the same way a cat does was mind-boggling to me. But all it took was one incident of Norman having an irritation of his “third eyelid” to understand that these two were connected in a way beyond my sensory ability. There were tears of frustration, because Norman was suffering and Cyndi wanted to help him feel better. “He doesn’t complain unless he’s really feeling bad,” she said. I went over to help as she gently rinsed his eye, and he was better. In time, I would see for myself that Norman truly is a very happy dog with a very loving personality.

Norman is also a very communicative dog. He smiles as he pants when he’s happy. And he actually “frowns” when he realizes Cyndi is going somewhere but he’s not invited. Granted, Cyndi hates having to leave him and has often fantasized out loud about taking him to work with her! So, when he’s sick, it’s very easy to tell. Norman just isn’t his normal, happy, playful self.

When he was diagnosed with liver disease, it was almost as if he had already died. He was very uncomfortable from having a swollen belly, and Cyndi just couldn’t stand to see him suffer. Amazingly, the swelling went down quickly. Then, something more amazing happened. The woman I knew as a very skilled Quality Assurance Engineer in the computer programming industry began to approach Norman’s medical condition as if it were “defective software.” She put her analytical skills to work overtime, believing that there was an eventual solution.

I was a witness to a miracle in progress as she tried one intervention after another. After each effort, she would develop a “new and improved” process. Through it all, Norman’s blood tests just got better and better! Today, if it weren’t for his debilitating arthritis, Norman would easily be mistaken for a two-year old puppy. He is truly a special dog, and he has chosen a very special human with whom to share his life.

Even though Cyndi is Norman’s “provider,” he has given her just as much, if not more. Together, they have learned to love unconditionally and to roll on the ground just for the pure joy of it. Norman’s philosophy of life is “smell everything, lick as if your life depends on it, wear your heart on your sleeve – then it’s easier to get to when it’s hurting, always express your feelings, and forgive every time you’re asked.” Sounds like a great way to live!

Chapter 1 – Norman’s Story

“Blessed is the person who has earned the love of an old dog.”
– Sydney Jeanne Seward

It was close to Christmas 2001 and something inside me kept telling me that there was something wrong with Norman. I thought the worst. “It must be cancer. He’s going to die, I just know it.” I finally decided to face my worst fears and take him in to see the Vet. I took him to the same Vet he had been seeing for 8 years. The symptoms I described were: excessive drinking, accidents (overabundance of urine), vomiting, diarrhea (soft stools) and flecks of blood in the vomit. Dr. X did a blood test, came back and told me he had liver disease. I asked what the treatment was for liver disease and he said there really wasn’t anything he could do. The next step was to determine how bad and how far along it was by doing an ultrasound. Norman had also been taking Rimadyl for Arthritis pain in his hips and knees. Dr. X. told me to stop giving it to Norman since it could be harmful to the liver. So, I scheduled the ultrasound, stopped the Rimadyl and started feeding Norman a prescription diet food for liver disease.

The next week Norman seemed to get worse. He swelled up like a balloon weighing in at 34 pounds. I thought he was going to pop he was so big. I took him in again to see if there was something that the Vet could do. A different Vet (Dr. Y) saw him and said that the fluid should not be removed and that the body would absorb it. The ultrasound was done while Norman was in this bloated state.

The Vet who performed the ultrasound consulted with Dr. X and they decided not to do a biopsy because the liver was too small, there was too much fluid and the prognosis was not very good. Dr. X didn’t see any point in spending more money on a dying dog.

I started taking Norman in to see either Dr. X or Dr. Y every week to check Norman’s blood levels.

The last time I saw Dr. X he further diagnosed the ultrasound as Cirrhosis. At this time, I asked Dr. X for prognosis and treatment options. He said he would probably live 14-30 days and that there wasn’t a formal conventional medical treatment for Cirrhosis. Just like humans, it was a slow and inevitable death. He said Dr. Y recommended a natural supplement (Milk Thistle) that she believed in but he didn’t necessarily offer any real hope. Dr. Y shared with me that the liver is an organ that can rejuvenate but not if it’s damaged beyond repair. She ordered the Milk Thistle for me and we started giving Norman Milk Thistle and Vitamin E along with the prescription diet food for liver disease.

I went home and began to mourn over what seemed to be the inevitable death of my 10-½ year old cocker spaniel. I held Norman in my lap and hugged on him like he could die tomorrow; and I prayed to God for a miracle.

“Lord, I thank you for putting Norman in my life. I know it seems silly to pray for a dog, but you know how special he is to me and how much I love him. So, I ask if it is your will, to allow him to live. And if it’s not, I ask that you take him soon so he does not suffer. In Jesus’ name. Amen.”

With my prayers in God’s hands, I began to do research to see if there was anything else I could do to take better care of Norman.

Hope for Healing

I started my research on my computer, searching the Internet. I found very little, but I did find one article that gave me hope. It was called Sunny’s Miracle Diet. Sunny’s story seemed very similar to Normans. Sunny had all the same symptoms, and using a natural home cooked diet, Sunny was still alive after 6 months. This hope spurred me on to find out as much as I could about liver disease, Cirrhosis, Natural Diets and food remedies for liver disease. All the information I found was scattered, and one seemed to contradict the other. So, I continued to search, and purchased all the books I could find on Natural Dog Diets and Natural Dog Care. One thing was becoming clear. The ONLY treatment for liver disease was through a radical change in DIET.

During the time I was collecting my data and doing research, Norman had been on a prescription diet food for liver disease. I started noticing that Norman’s love for eating the new food was growing into what looked like a mad starving animal. He seemed to be hungry all the time and was always wanting more and more to eat. This concerned me, but it wasn’t until I noticed Norman going to the extreme of actually eating his own stool that I knew this wasn’t good for him.

I decided to take a chance and made Sunny’s Miracle Diet for him to eat instead of the prescription diet food. I didn’t have all the information about natural diets at this time, so I didn’t know that it wasn’t the “perfect meal” for Norman. But, I thought it had to be better than the prescription diet food.

Norman loved the home cooked meal and seemed to be very satisfied with it. Although I did allow him to eat more than I normally would, I didn’t let him eat until he stopped on his own. He didn’t seem to want to stop. But, I did allow him to eat several bowls of Sunny’s Miracle Diet.

As I started compiling the research and learning more and more about Natural Diets, I found that none of the books really had a “perfect meal” for Norman. I realized quickly that there was no sure-fire “perfect recipe” that I could follow. I was going to have to either hire a Nutritionist or learn what I needed to know and do it myself.

I was short on finances, so I decided to learn for myself.

The rest of this book is a compilation of what I have learned after more than a year of caring for Norman. I include what I have tried, what I have learned, what worked and what didn’t. I hope that this book saves your dog’s life and gives you everything you need to care for the dog that you love.

I had nothing to lose, and the life of my dog to gain!

Since the Vet told me Norman was likely to live only another 14-30 days, trying a different food couldn't be any worse than doing nothing and allowing him to die. I decided I had nothing to lose, and I wasn't going to sit around and do nothing.

So here's what I did:

- 1) Stop using Conventional Medications! (Antibiotics, Pain Medications)
- 2) Start dosage of Milk Thistle (Silymarin) to support the liver (150mg 1/day)
- 3) Start dosage of Vitamin E to help detoxification (400 I.U. daily)
- 4) Start dosage of Ursodiol to add Bile Acid to help digestion
- 5) Start dosage of Multi-Vitamin with antioxidants (1/2 of human Multi-Vitamin per day)
- 6) Stop feeding prescription diet food for liver disease
- 7) Start Basic Natural Diet with recommendation for Liver Diet
- 8) Start using Distilled Water

Three months later, I went in to get a follow-up blood test for Norman. I asked the Vet about the Natural Diet and Sunny's Miracle Diet. She was not in favor of changing Norman to the Natural Diet and stood by the prescription diet food. I told her I had already made the switch and was going to stick to it.

Norman's Blood Test came back NORMAL!

She ran a full-spectrum blood test to see how Norman was doing. I also suspect she wanted to show me some deficiencies from Norman's diet to convince me to put him back on the prescription diet. The results came back that everything was NORMAL. Three months of Natural Diet and Supplements and Norman was back to NORMAL!

Norman's liver was more than likely still damaged, but it was rejuvenating just like I hoped. My prayer had been answered. **Norman wasn't just living with liver disease, he had survived it!**

Once diagnosed with liver disease, you can never fully recover as if no disease had ever occurred. So, it was never an option for me in my mind to stop the Natural Diet and Supplements.

My research continued as I searched for ways to improve Norman's diet.

I continued to find more and more information about liver disease (in humans and animals) and how to treat it with all sorts of alternative treatments, including food remedies. I started compiling a list of all the foods that were "good for the liver" and anything that was "not good for the liver".

Norman's Next Crisis Led Me to Find a New Vet.

Several months into the Natural Diet, Norman started having new symptoms.

Norman's new symptoms included: vomiting up his undigested food in the middle of the night, waking me up to let him outside 2 to 3 times a night, having accidents if left alone for more than 4 hours, and diarrhea. At its worst point, Norman wouldn't eat, and his stool looked bloody. I took Norman in to see the Vet again and she kept him overnight to determine if he was having Liver Failure, or something else. She kept an IV in him with Vitamin B-12 in it all night, and in the morning I was there to feed him his Natural Breakfast. He ate it up and we went home. Norman was better, but he was still having many of the same symptoms. He was waking me up at night, vomiting his undigested meal, and had occasional diarrhea. I was unhappy with the last visit with the Vet. So, I decided I needed some more help with Norman's diet and supplements. **I wanted a Vet who would explain more to me about his condition and give me the support I needed** to improve Norman's diet and his condition.

I interviewed a Homeopathic Vet who did not practice conventional medicine anymore. She opened my eyes to the world of Homeopathic medicine. We spoke on the phone several times, and I tried some of her homeopathic prescriptions to help Norman with his upset stomach. But, the end of this crisis came from due diligence on my part with careful note taking, and noticing all of Norman's behaviors and reactions after every meal.

I began my analysis by taking a scientific approach to diagnosing what was causing Norman's reaction. My hypothesis was that something in his diet was causing or contributing to his upset stomach, gas, diarrhea and vomiting. I just needed to figure out what it was. By this time, I had a very sophisticated diet consisting of a variety of meals and supplements. In order to determine what the culprit was, I was going to have to change only one variable at a time and see if it had any effect on his system.

I did this by sticking to one meal all day for several days to make sure that it came out (in the stool) okay. It takes 12-16 hours for a meal to go all the way through Norman's system from feeding to stool. I know this through giving distinctively different meals, then watching and timing when they came out. For example, carrots are not always completely digested. Feeding carrots in one meal and not in the next will allow you to tell when that meal was digested.

For 3 days I made notes on everything that Norman did, when he did it, how he did it and what it looked like. I removed one item from his diet at a time and waited at least a day before removing the next item. Finally, I found the culprit. Rice! Once I removed rice from Norman's diet everything went back to normal again. You must stick with the same meal that works for several days to make sure that everything is truly back to normal.

Here's a list of things to watch and note if you are trying to identify problem foods.

Laying (sleeping) Spots
Feeding Time
Urination Time
Bowel Movement (potty) Time

Stool Color, Consistency and Volume

Behaviors (e.g. sleeping, licking on a part of body, walking around frequently, begging, eating strange objects like charcoal, grass or feces,)

Timing of Behaviors

Meal Ingredients

Supplements Given

Timing of Supplements Given (with or without food and time of day)

Here's an example of one day's notes on Norman.

		Wednesday
		7/22/03
Date		
MORNING	Wake-Up Time	6:30am
	Morning Med Time	(usual) 7:00am
	Breakfast Time	7:15am
	Potty Patrol Check	Brown, Solid, Normal – 9:35am
NOON	Arthritis Med Time	(usual) 11:00am
	Lunch Time	11:15am
	Ursodiol	(Yes) 11:15am
	Potty Patrol Check	Brown, Solid, Normal – 11:35am
Lunch Vitamins & Supplements		(usual) 11:15am with lunch
AFTERNOON	Arthritis Med Time	(usual) 3:00pm
	Dinner #1 Time	3:15pm
	Potty Patrol Check	None
EVENING	Arthritis Med Time	(usual) 7:00pm
	Dinner #2 Time	7:15pm
	Potty Patrol Check	Brown, Solid, Normal (7:30pm)
NIGHT	Night Vitamins & Supplements	(usual + cal) 9:00pm without food
	Bedtime Snack (optional)	10:00pm
BEFORE BED	Bedtime Med Time	9:45pm
	Potty Patrol Check	None
Other Notes		
		Slept all night in bed
		No barking during the day
		No vomiting in the morning
		Ate Chicken, Veg., Pasta Stew
		Added Calcium to Night Vitamins

Since I am still improving Norman's diet, I often run across something else that Norman cannot tolerate. I use the same approach when trying new items and to determine what is causing gas, stomach and gastrointestinal problems. I have found that, when liver disease is present, gastrointestinal problems frequently occur when something new is not tolerated in the diet.

Soon after this crisis, I received a call from the person who would become Norman's veterinarian. I had found a list of Holistic Vet's on the Internet and e-

mailed one that was in my area. I had called during the crisis and she got back to me after it was over. When she called, I was pretty hard on her. I asked her a lot of questions and explained Norman's history briefly. I told her I was looking for a Vet who would take other alternative treatments into consideration and work with me on Norman's diet and supplements to help me take the best possible care of him. Dr. Forster answered all my questions and we scheduled a visit for her to come over to my house and take a fresh look at Norman's case. In order to do this, I needed to get all of Norman's Vet records from his previous Vet. Dr. Forster gave me great insight into what all the blood test results meant and the sonogram diagnosis. This fresh look at Norman's history was very educational and enlightening for me.

Notes on Blood Test Results

Blood test results should be used to look at the BIG picture. Never take one value by itself. Although some are very specific to liver disease, they should be looked at in relation to all other values. Also, keep in mind that blood test numbers are specific to the machine used to perform the test and should not be compared. Instead, compare the results to the reference range. "Flagging ranges" identify results that are out of the reference range and are usually printed in bold. Flagging ranges are just a guide. Consult your Vet for specific medical interpretations.

Liver Specific blood tests:

ALT – is a liver-specific leakage enzyme that is high when the body is losing cells.

AST – occurs in the liver, determined in conjunction with other liver tests (ALT, GGT).

Bilirubin – is formed in the liver before excretion in the bile.

Bile Acids – are synthesized in the liver from cholesterol.

Cholesterol – is produced in the liver and synthesized into bile acids. Low levels may indicate liver disease.

GGT – is an enzyme originating from the liver and is used in conjunction with other liver tests.

Potassium – low levels may indicate chronic liver disease.

Find the Cause, don't just Treat the Symptoms.

One of the most important first steps in treating liver disease is finding the cause. Without knowing the source of the problem, you are only treating the symptoms. Dr. Forster's initial consultation and review of Norman's history not only helped me understand his condition, it also identified several red flags. Those red flags were then looked at with 20/20 hind-sight (perfect vision) and used to determine the best course of treatment.

Review of History reveals Red Flags.

The first major red flag was that 3 months before Norman was diagnosed with liver disease, I had taken him in to have his teeth cleaned and annual vaccinations.

The blood test done before the teeth cleaning showed that his test for liver disease (ALT) was normal, but he was Anemic (low red blood cell count).

During and after this visit, Norman's body was bombarded with drugs and chemicals.

- He was injected with pain medication to remove a small growth on his ear.
- He was given anesthesia for the dental cleaning.
- He was given all of his vaccinations (Rabies, DHLPP/Parvo).
- He was given antibiotics for 20 days after the cleaning.
- He continued taking Rimadyl for Arthritis pain.
- He continued taking monthly Heartgard tablets to guard against heartworms.
- He continued taking monthly Flea & Tick control medication.

If Norman's liver was already damaged, all of this medication pushed him over the edge. The Anemia could have been a sign that he was not in the best condition to have all of this done at once.

The next red flag was his Gingivitis. Bad teeth and gums produce toxins that are harmful to the liver. And, it's a general sign of bad health.

Finally, I couldn't help but kick myself for giving him NSAID pain killers (Rimadyl) for his Osteoarthritis on a daily basis for over 2 years.

This reminded me of his not-so-severe symptoms of loose stools, constant drooling and gas, which I had ignored for years.

Of course, I was also feeding him the expensive commercial pet food (with rice). I had taken him in for gas and a sensitive stomach 7-years ago and never even considered that the pet food was the problem. I had been taught to feed Norman "the good pet food" and thought I was giving him the very best available.

I Didn't Know!

I feel like I didn't know anything before all of this happened. I didn't know to ask questions. I didn't know medications could have harmful side effects. I didn't know commercial pet-food could contain toxins. I didn't know bad breath, drooling and gas were signs of poor health.

Well, now I know. So, I question everything now, and I do my research. I'm educating myself and, hopefully, educating other well-meaning dog-lovers to do the same.

My Conclusions

I can't say for sure what caused Norman's liver disease. But, I've come to the conclusion that it was probably caused by a combination of: long-term use of NSAID pain killers, untreated Gingivitis, food sensitivities (rice), over vaccinating, old-age, and poor diet (not-so-healthy commercial pet food), combined with a dog breed that has a tendency to have liver problems.

Now that we knew what caused the liver disease, Dr. Forster helped me formulate the best treatment for Norman.

Dr. Forster's Prescribed Supplements and Vitamins.

Dr. Forster then did her own research and consulted another Holistic Vet and an Internist to give me additional information. She recommended other supplements and vitamins.

- Taurine 500mg 2x/day (for both liver and cognitive)
- L-Carnitine 500mg 2x/day (for both liver and cognitive)
- Alpha-Lipoic acid (ala) 100mg 1x/day (for cognitive)
- Vitamin E 200 mg + general antioxidant formula d alpha form not dl alpha
- Double dose of Milk Thistle (from 150mg a day to 150mg 2x/day)
- Add Turmeric (spice) (1 tsp daily) to his food – start small at first
- Canine Plus Multi-Vitamin with antioxidants from Vetri-Science (available from your Vet)
- Prozyme Digestive Enzymes instead of other brand (available from your Vet)

Notes on Supplements and Vitamins: I list brand names along with contents when available so that you can find your own source of these supplements and vitamins. There is a lot of variability in different brands, and sometimes they may not actually contain what is claimed on the label. So, stick with well-known and proven brands. I am not advertising for these items, only for their effectiveness in treating liver disease.

A complete list with recommended dosages has been compiled for your use ([see Appendix A](#)).

Since I started feeding Norman homemade dog food, specialized for his liver disease and added the additional supplements and vitamins, he has been sick four times. These were related to diet or arthritis. Each time he got sick I learned something new about how his diet (intake) affects his system.

Trial and Error – Adjusting Diet to Norman's Needs

I wish I could tell you that developing the perfect diet for Norman was easy, and that I got it right the first time. But, that's just not the way it happened.

Instead, I would develop a meal, let Norman eat it for several days or weeks and watch to see how he did on it. Sometimes the meal would be great for a few days, and then he'd be sick again. I'd go back to the drawing board to find out what went wrong and try again.

- I've gone from preparing each meal from scratch using strictly all "natural" ingredients to canned food from a Health Food Store, and everything in between.

- I've been an extremist where I made each meal using fresh vegetables and soy protein.
- I've been economical where I made large batches of cooked food and froze it for use over several weeks.
- I've been lazy and used healthy canned food.
- I've used hot water to heat his food, and I've used the microwave to heat his food.
- I've used raw beef, turkey, liver and bones, cooked chicken, beef and liver, tofu, soy granules, yogurt, cottage cheese, potatoes, yams, pasta, couscous, millet, barley, oatmeal, fresh fruit, dried fruit, fresh vegetables, frozen vegetables, and canned vegetables.
- I've tried healthy commercial food like Halo Canned Food and Sojo grain mixes that go with raw meat.

I don't know if I can say, "I've tried it all." But I've definitely tried many different recipes over the last year. And, I've learned a lot along the way.

Now you have the benefit of learning my lessons without having to go through it yourself.

The rest of this book is the compilation and presentation of all my research. The goal is that you will be able to digest this information quickly, and start putting together your own homemade diet with supplements for your dog. As I found out with Norman, there is no "perfect diet" for all dogs. That is the main reason the prescription diet for liver disease did not work for him. It is a one-size-fits-all recipe. You will need to do your own experiments with the ingredients and recipes that I give you to find what works for your dog. I recommend that you also work with a good Vet who believes in the use of homemade diets and natural supplements.

Over a year and a half after Norman's initial diagnosis, he is doing great. The last blood test a month ago came back with everything still normal. ([See Appendix D for a copy of blood test report](#))

Final Note – Treating Pain Associated with Arthritis

Norman also has Arthritis in his hips and knees. This is why he was on pain medication for so long. Now that he has a damaged liver, he can't have any of the typical pain medications.

About nine months after I started Norman on a healthy diet and supplements for liver disease, he gave me a scare. Norman had been a ravenous eater and very excited around mealtime. But now he was more than just excited. He was anxious, restless, drooling, panting, crying (barking), not sleeping for more than 2 hours at a time, inhaling his food, pacing around the house, hunting for cat poop outside, and eating it.

I tried everything. I tried various homeopathic remedies for gastritis. I changed his diet, increasing and decreasing the amount of protein and fat in his food. I

gave him more Vitamin C and B12. I gave him Bach's Rescue Remedy. I fasted him for a day. I gave him Gas-X. Nothing worked.

After 5 days of trying everything I knew to try, I took him in to see Dr. Forster. We did blood tests and everything was still normal. Her guess was that he was in pain. But we didn't know why. We decided to try a pain medication called Torbutrol.

I gave him the medication and fed him as usual. I left him alone for a couple of hours and when I returned he had urinated and soiled the house. He was lying on the floor as if he couldn't get up. His mouth was dripping wet from panting constantly. His back legs were so weak he could barely stand to potty. He was limping on his back left leg. He was so restless he wouldn't sit or lie down. He just kept walking around or standing with his head in a corner.

I called Dr. Forster and described his condition. She offered to come over (at 9:30pm) but said, even if she did, there wasn't anything she could do until morning at the clinic. She didn't think it was life threatening, but I had never seen him act this upset before. I was a scared, frantic mother afraid this was going to be the end for Norman. The best thing she told me was to get control of my emotions because my emotional state was affecting Norman.

She was right. I was an emotional basket case! I was so worried he was going to die I worked myself up into a panic. I immediately prayed for peace and for Norman's health.

Norman and I finally went to bed, but it was the longest night of my life. Norman got up every couple of hours, and I got up with him. Finally, at 7:30am we went to see Dr. Forster at the clinic. She worked Norman and me in as soon as possible. He was still acting the same. She said he looked like he was in pain. She kept him at the clinic to do x-rays and other tests to figure out what was causing the pain.

I left him there and went off to take care of myself. When she had the test results back, she called me to tell me why he was in so much pain. His back hip has severe Osteoarthritis, irregular joint surface and severely calcified discs. At his age and condition, surgery was not an option. She recommended that I try acupuncture for the pain. I took Norman for six acupuncture treatments but, ultimately, I found diet change and homeopathic remedies for arthritis and pain worked best to keep the pain under control.

Without homeopathic remedies for arthritis pain, I would have had to put Norman to sleep. He was in a lot of pain. But now, he is doing fine. He still has a limp. But he has no signs of anxiety, crying (barking), restlessness or panting. He sleeps throughout the night, sleeps most of the day and seems to be comfortable. He doesn't hunt for cat poop anymore and waits patiently to be fed.

It WORKS!

I am convinced that alternative treatments for liver disease and arthritis in the form of diet, supplements and homeopathic medications WORK. I wouldn't be writing this book if they didn't. I know that I would NOT have Norman with me today if they didn't work. I wouldn't be recommending them to you if I didn't believe with all my heart they are safe as well as good for your dog.

I hope you find the answers you're looking for, or at least the hope to keep looking for a way to help your dog heal. I know that if you love your dog as much as I love Norman that you will want to know what you can do to keep him at your side for as long as your dog isn't suffering.

I pray that you have as much success with your homemade healthy dog food and supplements as I have. I encourage you to ask your Veterinarian questions. Don't give up without trying. And, take good care of yourself and your dog. You'll feel better knowing you did everything you could for your dog.