

OZONE THE NEXT WAVE OF MEDICINE?

The world of science is constantly evolving and integrating new and improved ways of dealing with health issues. The use of ozone is one of the most recent and compelling developments science has to offer. Ozone is something that we have been aware of for a long time, but we are just now learning of the amazing benefits that it can provide to our health.

So, what exactly is ozone? Most of us think of something in the atmosphere and often negative when we hear the term used, however, ozone is actually oxygen in a different form. Ozone in its purest form is created when oxygen or O₂ is hit with a static electric charge forming O₃. The O₃ molecule is unstable because it wants to keep returning to its natural O₂ state. When used for therapeutic reasons, it must have an ozone generator to continue the flow of ozone. If not, the molecule will return to its natural state in 30 minutes to up to several hours.

O₃ has some astonishing properties! It has been discovered to be anti-bacterial, anti-fungal, anti-viral, anti- cancer, and an amazing anti-inflammatory. It has applications from hot tubs, sterilizing rooms, purifying air and drinking water, and waste treatment. Ozone has several remarkable medical benefits. Like anything new, it comes with a level of skepticism because of the unknown. We do know that high levels of ozone can be dangerous because it causes oxidation of the lung and tissue. Just like all medicines, a small amount can be therapeutic, however, large amounts can be fatal. Many will say that every drug we use is a controlled poison for that exact reason. As we dial in the "safe levels" then the possibilities of what regulated production of ozone can do is indeed impressive.

In modern medicine, there has been a lot of research on injecting ozonated IV fluids directly in the body for overall well-being or to boost the immune system. Work has also been done in the use of ozone to kill cancerous tumors. Injecting the O₃ molecule super oxygenates the blood, which allows the bodies immune system to function at a much higher level. Of course, we are not going to be injecting anything when it comes to grooming, but we can get great results topically with a much higher margin of safety.

There are two common ways ozone can be administered. The first is in the form of ozonated olive oil which is the only product that I am aware of that the O₃ molecule is stable enough to be bottled and dispensed. It is a long process of bubbling the ozone through the olive oil to saturate it. Ozonated olive oil is great for topical infections and wound therapy. The other form is an ozone generator, which for the grooming industry is usually bubbled through water which traps it and can be used in the bathing process.

It is important to note that ozone has several great properties, but it does not negate the need for quality grooming or therapeutic products. O₃ carries a slight negative charge so some may claim that it works like a shampoo, but due to the small charge it would not be a very efficient one. Ozone also does not work as a conditioner. Many people want the magic bullet after learning of the great qualities and believe that they can short circuit the process. It still needs and will have better results with the help of the right products.

The typical time that I recommend the use of the ozone is in the shampoo stage of a close(condition)-open (shampoo)- close (condition stage). The most common use of ozone is for skin infections, so in conjunction with products to treat infection, we are able to disinfect the skin at a much higher level than with just ozone or just products alone. This is especially effective with Bulldog folds and elephant skin

(lichenification). Some of the systems on the market have pads that also add to the whirlpool effect which adds a whole other level. Other systems utilize a bubbler stone which has less of this action.



Demodectic mange ~6 weeks of treatment
with MRSA/ MRSP

Credit: Cate Garcia

Some of the other areas that ozone is used very effectively is when the skin is very irritated like flea bite dermatitis. Often these dogs are fighting intense itching sometimes for weeks or even months with no relief. Typically, with a 5–10-minute bath (with correct products), you can eliminate the itch and everyone in the household gets a good night's sleep. We are seeing an uprise in clients that are also requesting it for their arthritic dogs. In many of these dogs we have seen mobility restored.



Irritation/infection
from wet collar

One bath with ozone
and product

Wound management is also an area where ozone is helping tremendously with great results. As a groomer, this is an area that you have to tread lightly, but with your own dogs or in situations with veterinary oversight, results can be amazing.

Ozone therapy is an excellent addition to the services that you offer to your clients, but it is imperative that you are adequately educated to use it safely as well as obtaining knowledge on the products that enhance the results. Ozone used in conjunction with the correct products can change and expedite the improvement of health and wellness in many different conditions.