

# Could This Light Therapy Be the Future of Pet Care?

A gentle, light-based therapy is gaining attention in veterinary care as a drug-free way to support healing, reduce inflammation, and manage infections. Is this approach ideal for your ailing pet?

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## STORY AT-A-GLANCE

- Ultraviolet blood irradiation (UBI) is gaining popularity in veterinary care as a noninvasive therapy that uses light to support an animal's immune system
- UBI involves drawing a small amount of the pet's blood, exposing it to ultraviolet light, and returning it to the bloodstream
- The treatment activates white blood cells, improves blood flow, boosts nitric oxide production, and helps modulate the immune system without suppressing it
- UBI helps treat various conditions, including infections resistant to antibiotics, chronic inflammatory diseases, and gastrointestinal issues, as well as aids in wound healing and cancer management
- The procedure takes under an hour, requires no sedation, and has minimal side effects. The treatment frequency depends on the pet's condition

Over the past few years, there's been a growing interest in new approaches to pet care, especially ones that don't rely solely on medications or surgery. One therapy that is getting more attention is called ultraviolet blood irradiation (UBI).

While it might sound advanced, UBI has been around for decades in human medicine. In the 1940s and 1950s, doctors hailed UBI as a breakthrough therapy and used it to treat life-threatening infections in humans, such as sepsis, pneumonia, and hepatitis. However, after the development of antibiotics, the use of UBI disappeared.<sup>1</sup>

Today, UBI is regaining traction in the world of veterinary care as a simple, safe, and natural way to help your pet heal from the inside out. The idea behind it is surprisingly straightforward — use light to support your pet's immune system and help their body fight off illness.

## What Is UBI and How Does It Work?

Also known as photoluminescence therapy, UBI involves drawing a small amount of your pet's blood using a needle, similar to how blood is drawn for any other test. The blood is mixed with a sterile saline solution and then slowly passed through a special glass tube. As the blood moves through the tube, for just a few seconds. It's then returned to your pet's bloodstream, where it begins triggering healing responses almost immediately.<sup>2</sup>

The light used in UBI includes three different types, namely UVA (320 to 400 nanometers (nm)), UVB (280 to 320 nm), and UVC (180 to 280 nm). Each type provides different protective actions — UVA helps kill bacteria, viruses, and fungi,<sup>3</sup> UVB supports immune balance,<sup>4</sup> and UVC helps destroy harmful genetic material in microbes.<sup>5</sup>

UBI helps your pet heal by improving how their entire body functions. Once the treated blood reenters their bloodstream, it activates white blood cells, making them more effective at spotting and clearing threats. Red blood cells also become more flexible, which improves blood flow through even the smallest vessels.<sup>6,7</sup>

Moreover, one of UBI's most powerful effects is its ability to boost nitric oxide, a molecule that relaxes blood vessels, improves circulation, and reduces inflammation deep within tissues.<sup>8</sup> As circulation improves, tissues receive more oxygen and nutrients, speeding up repair and recovery.

UBI doesn't suppress the immune system like many conventional drugs. Instead, it helps modulate it, reducing excess inflammation without blocking the healing process. It also supports detox by breaking down harmful compounds in the blood, easing the burden on the liver and kidneys. Some vets pair UBI with another treatment called ozone therapy, which amplifies the result.<sup>9</sup>

Because UBI strengthens your pet's ability to fight infection, it helps reduce the need for antibiotics in the first place. This makes it a valuable tool in the fight against antibiotic resistance, a growing concern in both human and veterinary medicine. By helping the immune system do its job more effectively, UBI offers a way to manage diseases without contributing to the overuse of medication.

## **Conditions UBI Has Been Used to Treat in Animals**

Integrative veterinarians are using UBI to support pets dealing with a wide range of issues, including:<sup>10,11,12</sup>

- Bacterial, viral, and fungal infections, including those that don't respond well to antibiotics
- Chronic inflammatory diseases like arthritis, asthma, and allergies
- Gastrointestinal conditions such as inflammatory bowel disease (IBD)
- Cancer, particularly blood cancers like lymphoma and leukemia
- Wound healing and post-surgical recovery
- Reactions to venom or exposure to poisonous animals
- Environmental and microbial toxin exposure

In some cases, pets show dramatic improvement just 24 to 72 hours after a single session. For chronic conditions, progress may be slower, but many owners report that their pets are more alert, active, and comfortable after a few treatments.<sup>13</sup>

## **Interested in UBI for Your Pet? Here's What to Expect**

UBI is considered one of the safest therapies available in veterinary care. Because it uses your pet's own blood without adding drugs, chemicals, or synthetic ingredients, the risk of complications is extremely low. The therapy works in harmony with your pet's natural biology, making it a gentle yet effective option for healing and recovery.

A typical UBI session takes under an hour. Your pet stays awake during the procedure, and there's no need for sedation or recovery time. Most pets handle the procedure without any issues. In rare cases, you might notice mild side effects, such as fatigue, a low-grade fever, or slight tenderness at the injection site. These effects usually resolve within one to two days.

As with any medical treatment, UBI must be performed by a trained veterinarian. Proper dosing and technique are key, and your vet will tailor the treatment based on your pet's size, condition, and overall health. For short-term infections, one to three sessions might be enough. Pets with chronic inflammation or cancer might need ongoing sessions every few weeks. Your vet will guide you on the right plan based on how your pet responds.

## **A Well-Established Treatment to Support Pet Health**

UBI is a time-tested therapy that is low-risk, drug-free, and especially helpful for pets facing chronic illness or taking multiple medications. Instead of adding more pharmaceuticals, UBI helps your pet's body do what it's built to do — heal and restore itself.

With better technology and more training available, UBI is becoming easier to access. More vets are learning how to use it, and more pet parents are asking for it. If you're someone who believes in working with the body, not just against disease, this could be what you've been looking for to help improve your pet's health.

### **Sources and References**

<sup>1</sup> [J Photochem Photobiol B. 2016 Feb 5;157:89–96](#)

<sup>2,9,11,13</sup> [Integrative Veterinary Oncology, Ultraviolet Blood Irradiation Therapy](#)

<sup>3</sup> [PLoS One. 2020 Jul 16;15\(7\):e0236199](#)

<sup>4</sup> [Conservation Physiology, Volume 8, Issue 1, 2020, coaa002](#)

<sup>5</sup> [NATDIS, UV Light for Disinfection](#)

<sup>6,8,10</sup> [O3 Vets, June 16, 2023](#)

<sup>7,12</sup> [Holistic Vet Services, Ozone and Ultraviolet Blood Therapy](#)

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