

SCIENTIFIC EVIDENCE

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Clinical Behavioural Medicine for Small Animals.

"In a retrospective study on spinal pain, injury or changes in dogs conducted in Sweden, Hallgreen (1992) found that 91% of dogs with cervical anomalies experienced harsh jerks on lead or had a long history of pulling on the lead. Uses of chokers was also overrepresented in this group. this strongly suggests that such corrections are potentially injurious.

Robin Walker BVetMed MRCVS

"In 30 years of practice (including 22 as a veterinary advisor to a police dog section) I have seen numerous severely sprained necks, cases of fainting, transient foreleg paresis and hind leg ataxia after robust use of the choke chain.

When the practice of slamming the dog sideways with a jerk that brought the foreparts clear of the ground and two or three feet towards the handler, became popular in the 1970's the resulting painful condition was known as Woodhouse neck in this practice. Some of these cases exhibited misalignment of cervical vertebrae on radiographs. It is suggested that an existing spondylopathy renders these dogs more vulnerable to injury.

My ophthalmology colleagues have decided views on the relation between compression of the neck, intraocular pressure disturbances and damage to the cervical sympathetic nerve chain resulting in Horner's Syndrome. I personally have seen a case of swollen eyes with petechial scleral haemorrhage and a number of temporarily voiceless dogs"

WHAT IS THE ADVICE FOR TRAINING MY DOG TO HEEL?

Please do employ the services of a professional to enable you to successfully train your dog to heel, please feel free to contact me for more information:
victoriapettraining99@yahoo.co.uk

Employ positive training techniques that enable you to show your dog how to heel on the lead. Shape your dog's behaviour, show them what to do and have fun training them!! Use the clicker or a whistle to effectively do this. Why not check out my clicker video and find out about clicker training?

What are the Best Collars/Harnesses to Choose?

Choose a good fitting, appropriately sized flat collar with an appropriate width that is comfortable for your dog or alternatively a good fitting harness, again with the appropriate width that is comfortable for your dog, providing support and comfort around the chest area.

Some dogs have particularly sensitive necks, especially toy breeds so a harness is the safest choice.

Be sure that the collar or strap of the harness that rests on your dog's chest is an appropriate width for your dog; especially be sure that this is not too thin for your dog that it cuts into the neck line/chest area.

Be aware of some collars where the width does change around the neck area sometimes they can narrow to a width that may not be appropriate for your breed/size of dog and may cut into the neck area' ..'

You can purchase collars that are of high quality and have padding inside to afford protection.

All of these tips such as choosing the correct width collar, whether to choose a harness or collar with padding are to be used in conjunction with positive appropriate training techniques but choosing the right collar/harness is vitally important enabling your dog to be safe and comfortable during the training process.

JUST say **NO** to the Choke Chain and Prong Collar!!
JUST say **NO** to Unethical and Punitive Approaches

Promote and Embrace Positive Training Methods and Show People What it is all About: Shaping Behaviour Through Positive Reinforcement!'



SAY NO TO THIS !!

&

SAY YES TO THIS !!



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What are the Potential Dangers of Using Choke Chains and other such Devices?

*As an Animal Trainer and Behaviourist I **DO NOT** support the use of choke chains or prong collars and strictly adhere to a code of ethics that includes the none-use of such devices.*

My focus when training animals is to shape their behaviour using only kind, professional and effective methods.

My aim when working with animals is to hone in on possible causes of behavioural problems and this encompasses a study of all aspects of an animal's environment, looking at home routines, enrichment, handling, present methods employed, diet, overall environment and much more.

My approach focuses on changing perception of the dog where undesirable behaviours exist, whilst focusing on the psychology of the animal concerned as well as shaping desirable behaviour. I work to treat the causes and not the unwanted behaviour itself. In conclusion I hope to improve the welfare of the animals I work with and in turn the collective lives of both pet and owner!

Victoria James

THE FACTS

Severe Physiological Damage (Resulting Conditions Can Include: hind leg ataxia, injured ocular blood vessels, tracheal and oesophageal damage, severely sprained necks, cases of fainting, transient foreleg paralysis, laryngeal nerve paralysis).

Using choke chains can inflict damage on dogs, cause pain and discomfort and lead to an array of behavioural problems

When using a choke chain, punishment is being employed in the attempt to teach the dog to heel. As the dog pulls on the lead the dog will experience discomfort, especially as the dog is corrected, and the lead is pulled/jerked back. When this happens pressure is placed on the neck area and consequent discomfort is applied. In this case the dog is punished for pulling on the lead, instead it is far better to show the dog how to heel and punishment is not necessary in order to achieve this.

The choke chain is not an effective training tool and the use of punishment can potentially damage your bond with your dog.

The use of the choke chain does not allow the dog to actually learn the skill of how to heel/walk well on the lead. The more effective way to train your dog to heel is to use modern and effective training aids such as clicker or whistle, along with appropriate shaping techniques to show your dog how to walk on the lead. Commands and reinforcement should be used in combination with the clicker to do this.

The use of the choke chain can damage the trachea.

THESE ARE FACTS !!

Your dog can develop negative associations with the use of the choke chain, for example if your dog pulls on the choke chain whilst interacting or seeing another stimulus such as another dog or person, the dog can come to associate the pain and discomfort the dog feels with that stimulus, therefore promoting possible issues with socialisation. We increasingly find high levels of aggression associated with the use of the choke chain and I always say 'aggression breeds aggression'. An aggressive approach to training will not promote your dog to be a well-adjusted and happy pet.

Positive training methods are so much fun and give great results, especially in terms of building that all important bond with your dog but most importantly they are ethical.

The mere act of using the choke chain and punishing your dog by pulling/jerking them back on the lead will promote your frustration and therefore translate to the dog in both your voice tone and behaviour. It is tiring for you and makes for a very unhappy walk/training session. Your dog will sense your frustration and this does not make for a productive session either! The more positive you are as well as relaxed and if you are having fun using the appropriate techniques, the better results you will obtain.

In addition to this a dog may become sensitised to the pressure/pain inflicted and the choke chain no longer prevents the dog from pulling, therefore the punishment ceases to be punishment and this approach becomes further ineffective.

The use of the choke chain is an unethical means of training your dog to heel or for walking your dog on.