

# Veterinary Chiropractor Travels to Help Heal Animals

By Aaron T. Bruckart for Gateway Newspapers

Michael Savko's latest patient definitely doesn't want to spend a session with her chiropractor. As soon as the door closes, she turns toward it, looking desperate to leave. Savko brushes her golden hair to help her relax before her session begins.

No, Savko's patient isn't a blonde soccer mom whose neck needs realigned after catching an errant header. She's a yellow Labrador Retriever with a torn ligament in her back left leg.

The proper term for Savko, a 1989 Penn Trafford High School graduate, is a Certified Veterinary Chiropractor. Don't get him confused with a veterinarian, though. Savko is a licensed chiropractor and worked with people until 2000, when he completed his certification to work on animals.

His love of animals turned him onto the new career path, and he describes the technique as a simple, yet effective,

way of dealing with injuries in an attempt to avoid surgery, medicine, or worse, putting an animal to sleep.

"The technique looks very easy on the animal, and it is," Savko says while working on Diamond, the yellow lab. "It's a very quick, specific impulse directed into a certain area."

The area Savko is talking about is, mostly, the spine. He uses a device called a veterinary neurological adjusting tool - a gun-shaped instrument with a pulsing end - to find where there may be miscommunication between the brain, spine and various body parts.

Each vertebra of the animal's back is connected to something different in its body. As he gives a pulse to each vertebra, he watches for "reads," which are visual signs of a neurological imbalance.

As Savko uses the tool near Diamond's hip, her left leg gives an involuntary jolt.

"See, we already know that that's where her injury is, and that's where she's responding."

The adjusting tool diagnoses and treats the injuries at the same time. While the jolts show where the imbalance might be, it also reminds the brain of how the nerves should properly fire.

"It's like taking fuses that are turned off and flipping them back on," Savko explains.

Diamond's owner, Tracey Zimmers of Plum, is pleased with the results so far. "We've been here twice before," she said. "And Diamond already has done really well."

Zimmers was initially told surgery would be the best option, but is happy with the choice of seeing Savko first.

Savko, who just came back to Pittsburgh in late 2005 after 10 years in New York, is happy there are people willing to give this therapy a try. He mentions how some people could be frustrated by options of surgery or medications, which have side effects involved.

The chiropractic technique won't give any extra side effects and avoids the use of invasive surgeries which, once completed, can't be taken back. The technique even helps release endorphins into the animal's body, which naturally helps it feel better.

He sees animals of all types on a regular basis, but is always accepting more. Savko doesn't have his own office because he prefers working with veterinarians in their offices, and he's willing to travel anywhere to help treat animals.

"The body knows how to take care of itself," he says. "But sometimes the body gets stuck in a mode where it thinks it's doing something right, but it's not."

**For more information on his work, Dr. Savko can be reached directly at (724) 261-7915, or online at [www.animalhealingnow.com](http://www.animalhealingnow.com)**

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