KELSEY BRYAN knows exactly how fast a Jack Russell terrier can sprint. She has to exercise the ears and administer medication when her dog Petey has had a bad case of otitis.

“He sees the bottle coming and I can’t catch him,” said Bryan, who owns three Jack Russells among the many animals she and her husband care for on their 100-acre spread in Jackson, Tenn.

“The dogs share our bedroom, and no one sleeps when Petey is scratching and whining.”

The details of a particularly bad bout of otitis externa that Petey endured in June 2008 illustrate the role laser therapy can play in aiding treatment and speeding recovery.

Petey was an especially likely candidate, the doctor noted. The faster the relief, the easier it would be to implement the traditional protocol,” Godbold said. “When a topical needs to be applied three to four times a day, compliance becomes paramount.

“The main thing I remember about the experience was how quickly it worked and how surprised we were.”

“It didn’t take long for Bryan to become a believer. “It was amazing,” she said. “The relief was almost instantaneous, and you could see Petey relax as he felt the warmth.”

“Once you see these kinds of results as an adjunct to your treatments, the education process becomes a lot easier,” Godbold said.

“The response (in Petey’s case) was one of the milestones in our use of the therapeutic laser,” he added.

In the following case study, Dr. Godbold’s notes are included in italics.

**PROBLEM**

Acute exacerbation of chronic otitis externa. Severely painful and swelling occluded the ear canals, preventing complete diagnosis.

**THERAPY PLAN AND PROCEDURE**

- Initiated standard protocol of oral prednisone, topical cephalaxin and anti-parasitic medications. The protocol was adjusted to use the Companion Therapy Class IV laser to initiate reduce pain, swelling and otalgia.
- Initial thorough examination demonstrated a mixed Malassezia and gram-positive bacterial infection with-out polymorphonuclear cells. This common presentation calls for diagnoses as well as anti-inflammatory and antimicrobial medications.
- A frequent challenge in this condition is the time lag between initial presentation and effect from medications. Occlusion of the ear canal simply makes topical treatment unsuccessful.

**THERAPEUTIC HISTORY**

- Bryan had been treating the pets of Bryan and her physician husband, David, for more than two decades, and he knew that Petey’s allergies and intolerance to Bryan issue his ears to clean them predisposed him to ear infections.
- Even for Petey, this was clearly an acute case.
- The realization that this case was ripe for use of the therapeutic Class IV laser “was like a light bulb going off,” Godbold recalled. “Pain, swelling and edema all present.”
- Because the clinic had been seeing osteoarthritic and other patients quickly react and experience pain relief with laser therapy, Petey was an especially likely candidate, the doctor noted. The faster the relief, the easier it would be to implement the traditional protocol.
- Despite her great trust in Godbold, Bryan admitted that she was skeptical.
- “It sounded very odd,” Bryan said. “My first thought was, ‘What could this possibly do for him?’

**RESULTS**

- Twenty-four hours after initial treatment, the owner was able to begin treating with topical medications at home. Five days after initial treatment, the edema, swelling, pain and discharge and debris were markedly reduced.
- The swift relief that allowed for easier application of topical meds was a key to the success of Petey’s treatment, Godbold said. When a topical needs to be applied three to four times a day, compliance becomes paramount.
- “Cases like these are fraught with all kinds of barriers put up by the pet and by the owners,” he noted.
- Another key to success: the mechanism of the therapeutic laser that increases blood flow, allowing medications to work faster and better, he said.

**DISCUSSION**

- The Contaminated Wound Protocol is imbedded in the programming of the Companion Therapy Laser equipment, Godbold said. He noted that the training he and his technicians received in preparation for the laser’s use made them confident in their ability to determine the correct settings to achieve the best results.

**TRIAL size of the area and the mass of the tissue being treated, Godbold said. A technician administered the laser therapy.”

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**COMMENTS**

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