

India's pampered pets lap up new treatments

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Acupuncture, blood filtration, kidney cleanses. No treatment is too much for the furry friends of Delhi's well-heeled residents, who splash out at five-star veterinary clinics to keep their pets healthy.

Teams of nurses and even foreign vets offering state-of-the-art healthcare to pets is a relatively new phenomenon in India, where millions live on less than \$2 a day and even life-saving surgery is often beyond reach.

But in the posher suburbs of the capital wealthy Delhiites bring in their pets for high-tech treatments found at few Indian hospitals let alone ordinary vet clinics.

"My baby had been vomiting and refusing food. I really got worried," said Sunil Kumar, a tech executive who brought his dog Kuku for extensive blood work at Delhi's RenalVet clinic.

"The government-run clinics are free but they are really pathetic."

RenalVet claims to be the first pet clinic to offer procedures including acupuncture and haemodialysis—a [blood](#) cleansing procedure—in South Asia.

Chabhi, a 14-year-old Indian mongrel, is one "patient" undergoing kidney flushes for a chronic condition.

Blood is passed through a filter and cycled back through free of toxins at

a cost of \$100 per session—a small fortune for most Indians.

"The good thing about haemodialysis in animals is that it is not forever," said Fernanda Scarpa Rodrigues, a Brazilian vet at RenalVet training her Indian counterparts.

"In fact just after a couple of sessions, the patient becomes stable and his condition can be controlled with specific diet and medication at home."

Success stories abound, like that of pomeranian Goldie. The small, fluffy dog was suffering from tick paralysis until treated with acupuncture, the alternative Chinese medicine where fine needles are inserted into the body.

"Goldie's hind legs collapsed one day and she could not walk," said Aman Kaur, an acupuncturist at RenalVet.

"We started [acupuncture](#) and soon she was back on her feet. We are now visiting other vets and telling them about these new techniques so that our animals don't suffer for lack of proper treatment."

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