



THIS MONTH IN THE KOI POND *Jerry Kyle*

KOI MEDS WE LEARN & CHANGE

Some of us are old enough to remember when salt was the wonder drug. Those who don't keep up with changing times may think it still is. There are still hobbyists and professional breeders who swear by salting to .5 as a safeguard. Last year I wrote that salt less than .1% does little or no good and more than .3% may cause more harm than good. And, I said don't salt year around. I am not a vet and don't come up with this stuff on my own. I get it from my vet advisors and simply pass it on in plain English. I first stole the idea from Doc Johnson's book and then had it reinforced by others with PHD written after their names. Learn and change. Some may not be convinced against their will but, others are learning and changing just as the vets are learning and changing.

In my first Lab Course the Vet Advisors discussed their preferences between Formalin and Potassium Permanganate (PP). I learned PP was powerful and did a good job but had to be handled carefully as too little may not do the job and only a little too much may kill, especially the younger or weaker. In my experience, I proved that by killing some fry. Perhaps that was why some of the Vets liked Formalin as they felt, for us amateurs, it was a little more forgiving. I found that these products hit hard and blasted (the flukes?) within the first hour or two. In a dirty pond they also oxidized the fine crap floating around in suspension and consequently used up their oxidizing properties (gill burning ability?) within a few hours later. In my clear water pond they couldn't do that so might continue to burn gills a little (lot?) longer. These meds that have the potential to do good also have the potential to do much harm. So say the Vet Advisors and so say I since my so-called smarts are all borrowed (stolen?) from them. I learn and change.

Some of us who know EXACTLY the gallons of our ponds like the power and effectiveness of PP. We are careful and know to increase aeration to get the water churning and to pre-dissolve the product with warm water in a big bucket before adding to pond. Water turns to a reddish purple color as the PP blasts the bad guys. When the oxidizing (killing) stops as its ability (effectiveness?) is all used up the water will turn a tannish color signaling the end of the treatment. In my clean water that takes about 10 -12 hours. If I reduce the dosage for a shorter duration, do I reduce the initial power to whack whatever I am after? Because the little guys can't take it, after 1 ½ hrs, no more than 2 hrs, I add Hydrogen Peroxide Solution from the local Drug Store. A quart costs under a dollar at the pharmacy. Water turns tan almost instantly and within a couple of hours I have the cleanest clearest pond as the purple dye color is all gone. Gone from the water and gone from the rocks. The smaller koi are clean without being subjected to lengthy stress and burning of gills for umpteen hours. This is just one of the alternative ways we learn to change the way we handle meds to be effective and safe. I learn and change.

We need to keep abreast of changes. At the last AKCA Seminar I saw a new product called MinnFinn. Lots of people were talking about it. Those who produce the meds we use to help our Koi are constantly improving products. I do not know what is in the stuff but what I do know is the MinnFinn treatment is in two parts. First part is applied to the pond water and whacks the pathogens. Then after 1 ½ - 2 hours part two is added which detoxifies part one and treatment ends. That also means potential gill burning and stress supposedly ends. I like the idea and it is exactly the way I apply the PP I was talking about. It is a way to more safely handle a hard hitting product. MinnFinn is touted to effectively hit hard and then be neutralized. Another treatment a few days later for some things (flukes?) may be advised. The sales peo-



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ple said it is also safer to handle and more forgiving than other products (PP?) out there that, while effective, must be handled with great care. Safer is an improvement for the average ponder and great to learn and change.

KoiZyme is another relatively new product that is bacterial in nature. It is safe to handle, not caustic, does not cause undue stress, and impossible to overdose. It is simply a bottle of safe bacteria. When a Koi gets a wound, bacteria (let's call them the bad bacteria) consume (eats?) the dead cells around the wound. They do not eat healthy cells, only the dead cells. The problem is the bacteria emit as a waste product a toxin that kills whatever cell it comes in contact with. Therefore, as it eats a dead cell its toxin kills the next cell so it has more food and can reproduce and on and on. The KoiZyme bacteria also eat the dead cells but gives off a waste product that is not toxic and does not kill the next cell in line. These good bacteria get in there and compete with the bad bacteria and also eat the dead cells. They do such a good job of it the bad bacteria simply starve to death. We are beginning to see more of these natural bacterial meds.

This month I received a notice from Carolyn Weise from Ecological Laboratories about yet another change. Microbe-Lift has a new product called SABBACTISUN and it is an herbal preparation. We have gone from salt to caustic chemicals to friendly bacterial and now to herbal solutions in our ever changing quest for safe Koi meds. The information I received describes Sabbactisun as a unique herbal preparations which support fish recovering from bacterial infections, with symptoms such as fin and tail rot, ulcers, bulging eyes (exophthalmia), milky skin, raised scales, mouth rot/fungus and dropsy (ascites). Sabbactisun supports the natural immune system of the fish. Pathogenic bacteria which are driven off the fish will ultimately die if they do not ultimately have a host, without the risk of becoming resistant. Sabbactisun helps at reducing bacterial infections as well as ulcers and wounds which often occur on koi. Regular antibiotics kill the non-resistant bacteria but do not heal ulcers. Sabbactisun does not only help to drive off the pathogenic bacteria but helps to stimulate and accelerate regeneration of damaged tissues, in a surprisingly short time span. An open wound or ulcer on which the bacteria have been killed by antibiotics still remains a sensitive place for reinfection and parasites, so even after an antibiotic treatment it is important to use Sabbactisun to help support the immune system and prevent reinfection. The notice goes on to say it can be used in any pond or aquarium and is safe for all life in and around it.

There is also a new herbal pond additive called PARAZORYNE, also by Microb-Lift, for the treatment of those parasites we find under the microscope. Parasitic infections are reduced by this product by causing the parasites be driven off the Koi. It doesn't kill parasites but, by driving them off and keeping them from returning to the Koi, the majority will die without a host.

As knowledge continues to improve we need to do our best to keep up with it and not be afraid of change. I have long felt there was a place in medicine for more holistic approaches to my personal health. Why not my Koi's health? Some say this is simply a preventative approach. In regard to my Koi, my Vet friends taught me preventative medicine was the best way to go. That way I don't have to resort to dangerous, caustic, life threatening meds. Yes, knowledge is changing and, for our Koi, it is all to the good as I learn and change. Join me in learning and changing as we care for our Koi.