

Veterinary Health – How Can You Help Your Pet?



T.A.L.K Before You Treat

Animals are not just small furry people with four legs. Their bodies work differently and process medication differently than ours. Medicating pets correctly can be tricky.

The FDA's Center for Veterinary Medicine (CVM) has asked that everyone with pets or food-producing animals to "**T.A.L.K. Before You Treat.**"

- T- Talk
 - Talk to your veterinarian before giving an animal any medication.
- A- Ask
 - Ask if the drug has been FDA approved for animals. This ensures the quality of the product and its safety and efficacy for the intended animal.
- L- Look at the Label
 - Always check **four** things before giving a medicine to your pet:
 1. How much? Always check the dose. Double check your math if you must multiply the dose by your pet's weight.
 2. How often? Check to see how often it should be given.
 3. How to give it? Be sure you are giving the medicine by the correct route. For example, by mouth, on the skin, injected in a muscle, or injected under the skin.

4. How long? Check how long you can treat the animal before you must check with your veterinarian or stop the drug.

- K- Keep Good Records
 - Recording your pet's medications is important for your animal's health and for your protection
 - If you have multiple pets, always note which animal was treated and with what medication. Note the dose used and why the treatment was given.

Specialty Pet Medication Compounding

When your pet gets sick, it can be difficult to get them to take their medications.

Specialty pharmacies have several techniques to make things easier for you and your pet.

- Some medications can be made into a [liquid](#) or a chewable for easier administration.
- Your pharmacist can flavor some medications with flavors like beef, chicken, fish, or liver.
- Sometimes multiple medications can be mixed together, so you can give them at the same time.

The Top 10 Pet Toxins of 2010

The poison center at the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA) recorded over 167,000 calls about pet poisonings last year. Here are some common causes of poisoning:

1. Human Medications

- Poisoning from human medications made up about 25% of calls. Human medications most frequently associated

with pet poisoning include: ibuprofen, acetaminophen, and some prescription medications.

2. Insecticides (chemicals to kill insects)

- Poisonings have occurred when owners treated flea problems in animals with insecticides not meant for animal use. Only use approved medications to treat your pets.

3. Rodenticides (chemicals to kill rodents)

- Always place rodenticides where pets cannot get to them.

4. People Food

- Grapes and raisins can cause kidney failure in dogs
- Onions and garlic can cause anemia
- Xylitol (an artificial sweetener common in chewing gum and other candy and foods) is toxic to dogs – keep these products away from your pets

5. Veterinary Medications

- Just because it's meant for pets, doesn't mean it's safe to eat the whole bottle. Keep these locked away just like human medications.

6. Chocolate

- Chocolate can cause agitation, vomiting, diarrhea, increased heart rate, and seizures.
- The darker the chocolate, the more dangerous – even a small amount of dark or baking chocolate can kill

7. Household Toxins

- Always keep cleaning supplies, batteries, and liquid potpourri locked away.

8. Plants

- Never let your pet eat house plants or flowers.
- Some can cause kidney or liver failure.

9. Herbicides

- Keep pets off treated areas until areas are dry.

10. Outdoor Toxins

- Keep toxins locked up.

If you suspect your pet has been poisoned, call your veterinarian or Animal Poison Control Center's 24-hour hotline at (888) 426-4435.

When Should You Take Your Pet to the Vet?

Always seek immediate medical attention when a pet:

- Bleeds excessively
- Suddenly collapses
- Has dilated pupils
- Has a seizure
- Demonstrates pain when being touched
- Show signs of shock or toxicity
- Is unconscious

Go to the vet as soon as possible when a pet:

- Has difficulty breathing under normal circumstances
- Tongue turns blue

- Gaspers for air
- Has blood in stool and/or urine
- Is vomiting repeatedly

When to schedule an appointment with the vet:

- Behavior suddenly changes or symptoms persist
- Rapid or steady increase or decrease in weight
- Cough that does not go away
- Hair loss or unhealthy looking coat
- Limping, disoriented, or shows signs of pain and aches
- Eyes look yellow, puffy, milky, or cloudy, have excessive discharge, or tear up a lot
- Ears look waxy, swollen, have a foul smelling discharge or pet shakes head a lot or paws at ears

Our “best friends” can’t talk to us to tell us if there is a problem. We need to keep them happy and healthy!