



## PIG TALES



John Mackinnon



Adrian Cox



Jennie Sykes



Julia James



Liz Windsor

### MEDICINE USAGE

*Written by Adrian Cox*

*In order to obtain the maximum benefit from the medicines and vaccines used on farm, it is important that they are used correctly, including proper storage. The following summarises the main issues that should be followed to maximise medicine effectiveness.*

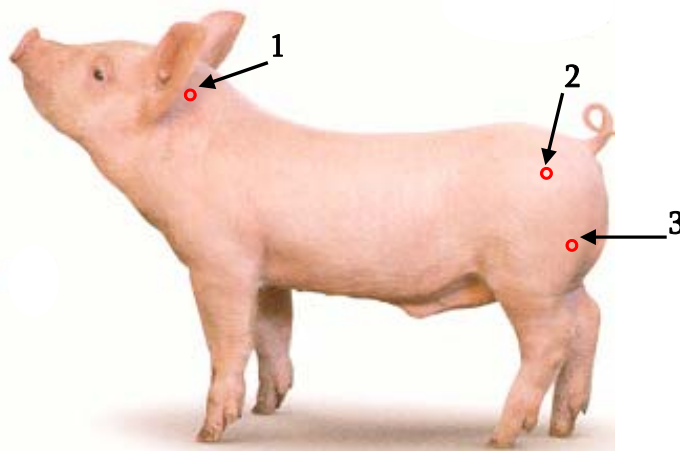
#### (1) Storage

The majority of clients store **all** veterinary medicines in a fridge. In reality, only vaccines and a few other products (e.g. Reprocine, Oxytocin and Depocillin) require refrigeration. The medicine label will state if the product requires storage within a fridge. If not, medicines are best stored in a locked cupboard at room temperature (8 - 25°C). A max-min thermometer should be used to check storage temperatures, especially of vaccines and the fridge adjusted/replaced as needed. Overstocking of fridges reduces efficiency and risks compromising storage.

#### (2) Injection of Medicines

Medicines will only work effectively if given by the correct route, e.g. intramuscular or subcutaneous, and at the correct dose. Do not be tempted to reduce costs by reducing the volume of injection.

#### Sites of Injection



- 1 = Site for subcutaneous or intramuscular injection.
- 2 & 3 = Sites for intramuscular injection (piglets only)



*The following table summarises suggested needle type for injection, but if in doubt, contact the surgery.*

Age bracket	Bodyweight (kg)	Intramuscular Injection	Subcutaneous Injection
Piglet	< 7kg	21G x 5/8"	
Weaner	7 - 30kg	19G x 1"	
Grower	30 - 60kg	19G x 1"	
Finisher	60 - 110kg	19G x 1" / 18G x 1½"	
Adult		18G x 1½"	19G x 1" or angled 18G x 1½"

**(3) Good Practice**

- It is important to use all products within their shelf-life, i.e. before the stated expiry date. After this date, the effectiveness of the product cannot be guaranteed.
- Once opened, the medicines have a finite effective working life. It is especially important that this is adhered to for vaccines.
- Use separate needles to draw an injection up from the bottle. Use a different needle to inject the pigs (unless a single pig only is to be treated). Putting "dirty" needles back into the medicine bottle may contaminate the bottle contents, thereby reducing effectiveness and/or helping spread disease.
- Change needles regularly if treating large numbers of animals to both aid injection and reduce disease spread. With piglets ideally change between litters. For other pigs change needles every 10 to 12 animals (sooner if needed). **Never** inject a healthy pig with a needle that has been used to treat a sick animal.

**(4) Recording Usage**

- It is a legal requirement that all medicine usage is recorded within 72 hours of administration. It is easiest if a dedicated medicine book is used (available from Larkmead). There is no need to record routine policies such as vaccination, Baycox usage, etc. A simple statement at the front of the record book, stating when and how these products are used will suffice.
- Remember to record the usage of water soluble treatment and oral dosers. These are frequently forgotten!
- It is important to identify treated pigs to ensure that they are not inadvertently sold with a medicine residue. This is especially important with the treatment of pigs above 60kg, sows or sick pen pigs. All withdrawal periods **must** be adhered to.

**(5) Disposal**

Used needles and syringes should be disposed of in a "Sharps" bin. Medicine bottles (empty or part-used) are classed as pharmaceutical waste and should be disposed of in a "Dooop" pharmaceutical waste bin. Both of these bins are available from Larkmead. The cost of the bin includes the cost of incineration by an authorised contractor.

*Please contact the surgery on 01491 651479 if there are any issues that you wish to discuss.*

