

OFF – LABEL MEDICINE USE

There are certain situations where the best treatment for your pet may require the use of medicines which do not hold an appropriate licence for the species concerned. In this case we might recommend using such a medicine "off-licence or label" but these will be prescribed in accordance with the cascade.

The cascade is a sequence that all veterinary surgeons must follow when treating animals. If the licensed medication for the condition to be treated is unavailable, then the vet must look for alternatives in order as follows:

1. medicines that are used in other animal species for the same condition
2. medicines for different conditions in the same species
3. medicines authorized for human use

There are a lot of human medicines that are extremely useful in the treatment of pets. Most of these medicines have been in general veterinary use for years, for example antihistamines, adrenaline, aspirin, digoxin, diazepam and pain killers. Most of these off-label medicines are widely used in the veterinary field; and there are documented dose rates known to be safe. Our use of off-label medication will be based upon our knowledge of the use in animals and an assessment of the risks and benefits involved. These medicines will only be used when they are indicated and deemed necessary, and no licensed alternative exists.

Due to the cost of obtaining a licence for full use in a particular species, there are only a few drugs licensed for use in the smaller and exotic pets (e.g. rabbits, birds etc.)

The consent form which is signed by the client when a pet is admitted for treatment. If you require further information about these consent forms please ask to speak to one of the vets.

PLEASE NOTE THE FOLLOWING IMPORTANT INFORMATION

- Any drug dispensed (whether on or off-label) will be dispensed with instructions for usage and, if applicable, special storage
- Please handle all drugs carefully (particularly if you know yourself to be allergic to some drugs)
- Keep all medicines out of the reach of children
- If you have any medication left over, we will be happy to dispose of it safely at no cost to you

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