



## Off-label Medication



If you have any further queries about your pet's welfare, please do not hesitate to ask.

We are happy to help!



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## What is 'Off-label' Medication

Medication not licensed for the proposed treatment in Animals is sometimes referred to as '**Off Label**'.

This means the medication has passed the regulatory assessments for **safety**, **quality** and **efficacy** - but not for use in a **particular species** of animal. For example, some medication may be licensed for use in dogs, but not for guinea-pigs.

Animal species may have many physiological differences from humans and other animal species - as a result they react differently to medication.



However, some unauthorised medication is commonly prescribed for pets and other animals within a protocol called '**the medicines cascade**'.

## How does the 'Medicines Cascade' work?

Under the 'cascade', if there is an authorised animal medication, then this medication must be used.

If there is no medicine authorised in the UK for a specific condition, the Vet responsible for treating the animal may treat the animals in accordance with the following sequence:

**First** the Vet should use a veterinary medicine authorised in the UK for use in another animal species or for a different condition in the same species.

**Second**, If there is no such medicine, the Vet should use either;

- a) a medicine authorised for human use
- b) a veterinary medicine from another EU country or a country outside the EU in accordance with an import certificate from the Veterinary Medicines Directorate (VMD)

**Third**, if there is no such medicine, a medicine may be used that is prepared extemporaneously by a Vet, Pharmacist or a person holding an appropriate manufacturer's authorisation.

## How does this apply to me?

The Vet will only prescribe 'off-label' medication if they believe it to be appropriate treatment for your animal in line with the 'medicines cascade'.

However, you should be aware that there may be unknown side effects associated with the use of this medicine in this animal. The Vet will be happy to discuss any concerns you have about the medication being prescribed.



By accepting the medication you consent to its' use and will be asked to sign our log book to indicate you have received the medication prescribed under the cascade.

If you have any questions about your pet's medication, please just ask.