



Animal Medicines – Protecting Both Pets & People

Experts estimate that 60% of all human diseases can move from human to animal and vice-versa. In fact, over the past three decades, approximately 75% of new emerging human infectious diseases have been of animal-origin or zoonotic. Healthy animals mean healthy people and in the case of pets, allow families to enjoy the known & proven benefits inherent in the human-animal bond. To keep animals healthy, veterinarians use animal medicines to prevent, control and treat disease.

The animal health industry researches, develops and distributes licensed medicines and vaccines both for companion animals (pets) and food-producing animals. It is a dynamic and innovative sector delivering quality, safe, and effective products. Pets are integral parts to many families with owners wanting to provide their pets with quality healthcare, which allows them to lead healthy lives. The animal health industry enables owners to do this by making safe, effective products of high quality available for sale in Canada.

Pet owners are responsible for ensuring that they do all they can for the health and good of the animals in their care. Despite the success of preventative measures such as use of vaccines, pets can get sick and may require treatment. Owners should schedule an annual physical exam for every pet to detect and correct potential health conditions early and save on medical bills in the long run. Veterinarians play a critical role in ensuring our pets' optimal health. They are highly trained health professionals with the skill set necessary to assess a pet's wellness. Veterinarians advise owners on a wide range of topics such as infectious diseases and conditions, or routine healthcare which includes vaccination, worming, flea treatments, dental health and skincare. The animal health industry provides veterinarians with the tools to vaccinate animals, the medications to treat worms and fleas, the anesthetic for surgery and the antibiotics to treat infection.

Animal health companies spend millions of dollars and many years researching and developing new drugs formulated to treat animals. Many veterinary medicines are used in a variety of species. Target animal testing must be conducted for each species. Products are developed in a range of dosages and formulations to ensure that the needs of individual species are met as well as the conditions of administration. To achieve this, products undergo years of study to prove their effectiveness before they are authorized a license or approval for sale. Animal drug products come under the authority of Health Canada's Veterinary Drugs Directorate while vaccines are licensed by the Canadian Centre for Veterinary Biologics of the Canadian Food Inspection Agency. Pesticides are licensed by the Pest Management Control Agency, Health Canada.

Medications for your pet will fall into one of three categories:

- Drugs – such as antibiotics, treatments for pain or inflammation to name just a few. These can be identified by a Drug Identification Number or DIN issued by Health Canada on their packaging.
- Biologics – are typically the annual vaccines your pet receives. These products are regulated by the Canadian Food Inspection Agency and are identified by a Canadian Veterinary Biologics Establishment License No on their packaging.
- Animal pesticides are labeled with a PCP number which is issued by the Pest Management Regulatory Agency, Health Canada.

In recent years, animal health products have been made available for purchase online through Internet pharmacies or sources other than a veterinarian. The animal industry cautions pet owners that these products may not meet the same regulatory standards as Canadian approved product. The regulatory standards are set to ensure consistent manufacturing and product quality control, scientifically proven label claims, and a pharmacovigilance system to monitor adverse events and therefore to protect animals and consumers.

Similar to people, pets may receive medications / prescriptions for treatment at home. It is important that the full course of medication is completed as per the veterinarian's instructions even if your pet's health appears to have improved. Likewise, if your pet has an abnormal reaction to a medication, be sure to contact your veterinarian. Your veterinarian will report this information to the product manufacturer who is required to investigate these types of 'adverse events' and report the information to Canadian authorities to ensure the product's continued safety for other animals.

The Canadian Animal Health Institute represents the manufacturers and distributors of animal medications in Canada. Its members are committed to providing safe and effective products to ensure optimal health for all of Canada's animals. Visit our website at: www.cahi-icsa.ca to learn more about how our industry contributes to animal health.