

Veterinary Medicines Summary

Pharmacists working in registered premises are authorised to supply veterinary medicines for use in animals under certain circumstances (e.g. when there is a valid prescription) and as with human medicines, are responsible for any medicines supplied.

There are four classes of veterinary medicines:

Class	Description	Who Can Supply?	Records
<i>AVM-GSL</i>	Authorised veterinary medicine – general sale list	No restrictions	
<i>NFA-VPS</i>	Non-food producing animal veterinarian, pharmacist suitably qualified person	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Veterinary surgeon • Pharmacist • Suitably qualified person • Written prescription not required 	Good practice
<i>POM-VPS</i>	Prescription-only medicines veterinarian, pharmacist, suitably qualified person	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rx required • Veterinary surgeon • Pharmacist • Suitably qualified person 	Legal requirement to keep records of supplies for a period of 5 years
<i>POM-V</i>	Prescription only medicines veterinarian	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rx required • Veterinary surgeon • Pharmacist 	Legal requirement to keep records of supplies for a period of 5 years

Prescription Requirements:

- POM-V or POM-VPS Prescriptions may be:
 - Oral: if the prescriber also supplies it
 - Where a VMP is not supplied by the person who has prescribed it, it must be written

A prescription must include:

- Name, address and telephone number of prescriber, qualification and signature of prescriber
- Name and address of owner/keeper
- Identification and species of the animal and its address (if different from the owner's address)
- Date of prescription
- Name, quantity, dose and administration instructions of the medicine. *Note "as directed" is not an acceptable administration instruction*
- Any necessary warnings and withdrawal period (i.e. the time that must elapse between when an animal receives a medicine and when it can be used for food)
- Where appropriate, a statement highlighting that the medicine is prescribed under the veterinary cascade
- If the prescription is repeatable, the number of times it can be repeated

Controlled Drug Prescriptions:

- Usual Controlled Drugs prescription requirements apply.
- Where Schedule 2 or 3 Controlled Drugs have been prescribed, a declaration that "the item has been prescribed for an animal or herd under the care of the veterinarian".
- Address of prescriber must be in the UK.
- No requirement to use standardised private prescription forms or for prescriptions to be submitted to the relevant NHS agency.
- Veterinary prescriptions should be retained for five years

Prescribing Cascade:

The cascade exemption within the Veterinary Medicines Regulations allows the supply of other medicines that are not licensed for animals. It is unlawful to supply a human medicine against a veterinary prescription unless it is prescribed by a veterinary surgeon and specifically states that it is "for administration under the cascade", on the prescription or other wording to this effect.

A pharmacist supplying a POM-VPS or NFA-VPS must:

- Always advise on the safe administration of the product
- Advise on any warnings or contraindications on the label/leaflet
- Be satisfied that the person using it is competent and intends to use it for an authorized use
- Not supply more than the minimum quantity required for treatment

Labelling:

When a medicine is supplied by a pharmacy for use under the cascade, the following details must appear on the dispensing label unless they already appear on the packaging and are not obscured by the dispensing label:

- ✓ Name of the prescribing veterinary surgeon
- ✓ Name and address of the animal owner
- ✓ Name and address of the pharmacy
- ✓ Identification and species of the animal
- ✓ Date of supply
- ✓ Expiry date of the product
- ✓ The name or description of the product or its active ingredients and content quantity
- ✓ Dosage and administration instructions
- ✓ If appropriate, special storage instructions
- ✓ Any necessary warnings for the user (e.g. relating to administration, disposal, target species, etc.)
- ✓ Any applicable withdrawal period
- ✓ The words: 'For animal treatment only'
- ✓ The words: 'Keep out of reach of children'

If the medicine is not prescribed under the cascade, the Veterinary Medicines Regulations do not specify that a dispensing label is required although providing a label is good practice.

Record keeping:

The following points should be considered regarding record keeping for veterinary medicines:

- 📄 Records must be kept for receipts and supplies of POM-V and POM-VPS products and must show:
 - name of the medicine
 - date of the receipt or supply
 - batch number
 - quantity
 - name and address of the supplier or recipient

- ❏ If there is a written prescription, record the name and address of the prescriber and keep a copy of the prescription
- ❏ Pharmacists can either keep all documents that show the required information or can make appropriate records in their private prescription book
- ❏ Records can be kept electronically
- ❏ Records and documents must be kept for at least *five years*
- ❏ Pharmacies that supply POM-V and POM-VPS medicines must undertake an annual audit

Adverse Reactions:

Pharmacists should be mindful to the possibility that veterinary medicines can cause adverse reactions in humans, as well as in animals. The Suspected Adverse Reactions Surveillance Scheme (SARSS) is a voluntary scheme for monitoring reports of suspected adverse reactions to veterinary medicines in both humans and animals in the UK. It is the equivalent of the 'yellow card' scheme for human medicines.

IMPORTANT LEGAL ISSUES:

- It is illegal to sell or supply medicines not licensed as veterinary medicines including human medicines such as GSL and P medicines for use in an animal unless dispensing against a veterinary prescription under the veterinary cascade. This applies even if the veterinary surgeon has instructed the animal owner to purchase an over-the-counter human product from a pharmacy.
- It is a legal requirement for pharmacists who supply NFA-VPS medicines or prescribe POM-VPS medicines to advise on how to use the product safely; advise on any applicable warnings and contra-indications on the packaging or label; be satisfied that the recipient intends to use the medicine correctly and is competent to do so; prescribe or supply the minimum quantity required for treatment.
- Unless a transaction has been especially authorised in advance by a pharmacist and the person handing out the medicine is judged to be competent, the physical presence of the pharmacist is required for POM-V, POM-VPS and NFA-VPS medicines to be supplied.

Further information including a database of veterinary medicinal products and guidance documents are available on the Veterinary Medicines Directorate website: www.vmd.defra.gov.uk