

Park Vets – Use of Unlicensed Medicines

In veterinary medicine we do not have as big a range of authorised medication for each species of animal as there is in human medicine. It isn't practical or cost effective for drug manufacturers to test every drug in every species. For this reason we may need to use a drug which isn't licensed in a particular species, for the condition that we need to treat.

A 'licensed' drug is one that is stated to treat a specific condition at a specific dose in a specific species e.g. Milbemax is licensed to treat worms in dogs and cats when used as per the manufacturer's data sheet.

Unlicensed drugs have not undergone any formal testing and may therefore have un-foreseen side-effects, however, many of these drugs are widely used by vets including diplomate holders (similar to hospital consultants) who are experts in their area of work. We use the recommended dosing regimes used by these professionals.

The drugs which the practice may wish to use have been in general veterinary use for years e.g. those found in the emergency box in most operating theatres (adrenaline, at-ropine). Other examples are well known human medicines for which there is no licensed veterinary equivalent, for example Lactulose, Diazepam, Ranitidine (Zantac), Omeprazole (Losec).

As your veterinary surgeons, we need to gain your 'informed signed consent' to enable us to use these necessary unlicensed medications. Hence we ask each of our clients to sign such a form to give us this permission. These will form part of your clinical records for the lifetime of your pet.

We will keep you informed as to any use of 'unlicensed' medicines in your pet, and will make data sheets available for each product.