



Call us if  
you have any  
questions!

VetnCare hospitals strive to provide the highest quality medical care for your pet. Part of this process is to ensure that your pet receives only top quality pharmaceuticals. There are many online pet pharmacies and many offer enticing prices. Unfortunately, these deals may not always be as good as they seem, with counterfeit and altered medications commonly dispensed to patients. As such, our online pharmacy policy is as follows:

*“In accordance with the California Veterinary Medical Association (CVMA) policy on prescriptions and assuming we have a current doctor/patient relationship with your pet, we can fill your prescription at our clinic. Alternatively, we will happily provide you with a written prescription to take to an outside pharmacy. We will not provide any prescription information to anyone other than you, and will no longer directly respond to requests from outside pharmacies (by either fax or email).”*

Our goal is to make sure you are educated on any choices you make in regards to your pet’s medications. Please consider the following important factors prior to using alternative pharmacies:

1. Be aware that there is wide variation in online pharmacies, ranging from good to poor. It is important to always do your research. The online pharmacy industry is not well regulated at this time. Some information about this from sources such as the FDA and CVMA will be included in this packet for your reference.
2. When considering the use of online pharmacies, it is important to note that all of the major manufacturers of veterinary products have policies to sell exclusively through veterinarians. This means that there is a chance that these products may have been illegally diverted, are counterfeit or have been mishandled or compromised in some way. In addition, many of the product guarantees made by manufacturers are void when sold outside the proper veterinary channels. So if your pet has an issue with the product, there will be no compensation or information from the manufacturer.
3. Some of the top online pharmacies, including 1-800-PetMeds, have been cited and fined by the FDA and State Pharmacy Boards for failing to follow applicable pharmacy and prescription laws and regulations. If even some of the more ‘reputable’ online pharmacies are practicing less than legal methods, it is worth a pause to consider consequences, prior to using any online pharmacy.

Remember that our goal at VetnCare is to provide the highest quality medicines possible with the highest level of support for our clients. This includes educating our clients on topics such as preventative care, medical and surgical treatments, medications and end of life decisions.

Please do not hesitate to ask if you have any questions in regards to online pharmacies or our policies.



Dear Valued Clients and Friends,

This letter is to inform you of our new online/outside pharmacy policy going forward. We are no longer able to respond to faxed requests for prescriptions from outside pharmacies. This philosophy is in line with the California Veterinary Medical Association's (CVMA) policy for online/outside pharmacies. We have instituted this change out of a concern for our patients, trying to ensure that clients are receiving US manufactured, FDA approved medications from a licensed pharmacy. Responding by fax or email to a prescribing pharmacy also opens us up to potential litigation claims, should the patient have a reaction to a prescribed medication. Additionally, manufacturers do not provide guarantees on medication supplied through online or outside channels. More information regarding our decision is outlined in the following pamphlet, along with information from the FDA's 'AWARE' campaign, the CVMA's pharmacy policy and a letter from Elanco, manufacturer of Trifexis, one of our pharmaceutical partners.

We hope you realize this is a carefully considered decision and that we have your pet's best interest in mind.

Please do not hesitate to contact us with any questions or concerns you may have.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "A. Moffatt", written in a cursive style.

**Dr. Andrew Moffatt**  
**Managing Director of VetnCare**

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Companion Animal Health

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Dear Valued Client:

Elanco is a leading manufacturer of FDA-approved veterinary pharmaceutical products, including Comfortis<sup>®</sup> (spinosad) and Trifexis<sup>®</sup> (spinosad + milbemycin oxime). These products are restricted, under federal law, for use only by or on the order of a licensed veterinarian.

Elanco has maintained a strict policy that limits the distribution of our products to licensed veterinarians. Unauthorized sources of Elanco products, including Internet, big box retail and warehouse club pharmacies do not purchase Elanco products from Elanco or any of our authorized veterinary distributors.

It has come to our attention that some of these online and retail pharmacies are tampering with our packaging to avoid adherence put in place to ensure our strict quality standards. This includes defacing original packaging and/or repackaging tablets in non-tested bottles and paper or plastic bags. Once removed from their intended packaging, we can no longer account for the distribution of our products.

To ensure product efficacy and quality, we strongly recommend you purchase Elanco products only through your veterinarian. If a product is purchased outside of the veterinary-client-patient relationship, the following may occur:

- The product may have been outside a documented chain of custody and we cannot ensure it has been handled according to label requirements
- A product acquired through unauthorized sources, with or without a prescription, will not qualify for any product guarantee reimbursements or be eligible for any consumer promotional offers
- We cannot guarantee the product hasn't been tampered with in some way
- The product may have been defaced and important information may be missing
- The product may be counterfeit

Since 2010, Elanco has identified close to 400 veterinarians/diverters who failed to meet our corporate sales policy and their ability to purchase Elanco Companion Animal products has been revoked. Elanco is constantly evaluating new ways to identify and stop those who choose to participate in this deceptive action.

We are committed to bringing high-quality, innovative products to pets. We believe your veterinarian is your best resource in recommending these products to you — and in keeping your best interests at heart. We encourage you to purchase veterinary products through your veterinarian, who is trained to make the best recommendations for you and those you love.

Sincerely,



Stephen A. Connell, DVM  
Director of Technical, Academic and Consumer Services

## **E—Educate Yourself about Online Pet Pharmacies**

The best defense you have against illegal online pet pharmacies is education. Do your homework and be online pet pharmacy A.W.A.R.E. before you purchase your pet's medicines online. **An informed consumer is an empowered consumer.**

For more information about purchasing pet medicines from online pet pharmacies, visit the U.S. Food and Drug Administration Center for Veterinary Medicine's website at: [www.fda.gov/AnimalVeterinary](http://www.fda.gov/AnimalVeterinary), or call CVM at: **1-240-276-9300**.

For additional information, visit the following sites:

**THE U.S. FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION**

<http://www.fda.gov>

**NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF BOARDS OF PHARMACY**

<http://www.nabp.net>

**AMERICAN VETERINARY MEDICAL ASSOCIATION**

<http://www.avma.org/issues/prescribing/default.asp>



FDA Center for Veterinary  
US Department of Health and Human Services

08/11



# **ONLINE PET PHARMACIES**

**Protect Yourself and Your Pet:  
Be**

# **A . W . A . R . E .**

**I**f you've ever searched online for prescription pet medicines, you've no doubt seen eye-catching, attention-grabbing claims. They sound convincing in their promises of convenience and lower prices. But are these claims always true?



**“Affordable pet prescriptions!”**  
**“No prescription required!”**

**“Pet meds at discount prices!”**

*“Your best source for pet meds!”*

Keep an eye out for red flags. Be careful if the ...

- site does not require veterinary prescriptions for prescription medicines.

Websites that sell prescription veterinary medicines without valid veterinary prescriptions are breaking the law. Under the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act, a pharmacy can't sell you a veterinary product, illegal online pet pharmacies may contain the actual drug, may contain contaminants or the incorrect amount of drug, may not work as well due to age or being stored in conditions that were too hot, cold, or humid, and may not have the proper directions for use. If you are unhappy with ordered products, illegal online pet pharmacies may fraudulently leave you with no way to get your money back.

If you still want to purchase your pet's prescription medicines online, remember you can protect yourself by doing your homework and being online pharmacy A.W.A.R.E.

### **A—Ask Your Veterinarian**

Before you purchase online, talk with your veterinarian! Your veterinarian wants what's best for you and your pet. Ask your veterinarian questions like, “Do you trust the Internet pharmacy site?” “Have you ever worked with the pharmacy?” “Have other clients used that site? If so, what were their experiences?”

### **W—Watch for Red Flags**

When buying from online pharmacies,

- keep an eye out for red flags. Be careful if the ...
- site does not require veterinary prescriptions for prescription medicines.
- site does not list its physical business address, phone number, or other contact information. If something goes wrong with your order, can you get in contact with them?
- site is not based in the United States. If an out-of-country site fraudulently takes your money, there's not much the U.S. government can do to help you get your money back.

- site is not licensed by the State Board of Pharmacy where the business is based. If the site operates in the United States, check the National Association of Boards of Pharmacy (NABP) website to see if the pharmacy is properly licensed: <http://www.nabp.net/consumers/board-of-pharmacy-contacts/>.

- site does not protect your personal information.

- sites' prices are dramatically lower than your veterinarian's or other websites' prices. If it seems too good to be true, then it probably is.

- site ships you medicines that you didn't order or that look very different from what your pet normally takes.

Don't give these medicines to your pet! Contact the site immediately!

### **A—Always Check for Site Accreditation**

In addition to following Federal and State licensing and inspection requirements, in 2009, the National Association of Boards of Pharmacy (NABP) created a voluntary accreditation program called **Vet-VIPPS** (Veterinary-Verified Internet Pharmacy Practice Sites). Vet-VIPPS accredited online pet pharmacies: • are appropriately licensed in the states from which they ship drugs • have successfully completed a 19-

**A** - Ask your veterinarian  
**W** - Watch for red flags  
**A** - Always check for site accreditation  
**R** - Report problems and suspicious pharmacies  
**E** - Educate yourself about online pet pharmacies

- point review and online survey undergo yearly VIPPS review and re-accreditation, and
- undergo NABP on-site surveys every three years.

Vet-VIPPS accredited pharmacies must meet other criteria, including protecting client confidentiality, strict quality assurance, and making sure prescription orders are valid.

### **R—Report Problems and Suspicious Online Pet Pharmacies**

If your pet has a problem with a medicine purchased online (for example, a reaction to the medicine or the medicine's maker. To report problems directly to the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) Center for Veterinary Medicine (CVM), call **1-888-FDA-VETS**. For a copy of the reporting form (FDA Form 1932a) and for more information on how to report problems, visit the following website: <http://www.fda.gov/AnimalVeterinary/SafetyHealth/ReportaProblem/ucm055305.htm>.

Protect yourself, your pets, and others! Don't fall victim to illegal online pet pharmacies. Report suspicious online pet pharmacy sites to the FDA and the NABP at: FDA: <http://www.fda.gov/Safety/ReportaProblem/ucm059315.htm> NABP: <http://www.nabp.net/>