

# Your Pet's Prescriptions

***There are almost as many ways of buying medications for your pet as there are for yourself.***

For a veterinarian to write a prescription for your pet, they must establish a **Veterinarian-Client-Patient Relationship (VCPR)**. Baseline bloodwork is required prior to starting some medications and, if taken long-term, your pet may need lab tests regularly based on their physical status and response to treatment. Changes in health or organ function may necessitate adjustments to your pet's prescriptions.

Generally, medication can be purchased directly from the prescribing veterinarian's office. Prescriptions can be written or called into a regular pharmacy or they can be ordered through an online pharmacy. In most states, including Ohio, veterinarians are not legally allowed to fill prescriptions for other veterinarians outside of their hospital.

Although there are a wide variety of medications available, not all medications or formulations are safe and not all generic medications are appropriate treatment options for pets! Some liquid versions may contain xylitol, which is toxic to dogs but used commonly in human foods and medications. Always ask a veterinary professional if you have questions. Keep your veterinarian informed of all supplements and medications — prescription and over-the-counter — and the doses that your pet takes in order to avoid dangerous combinations.

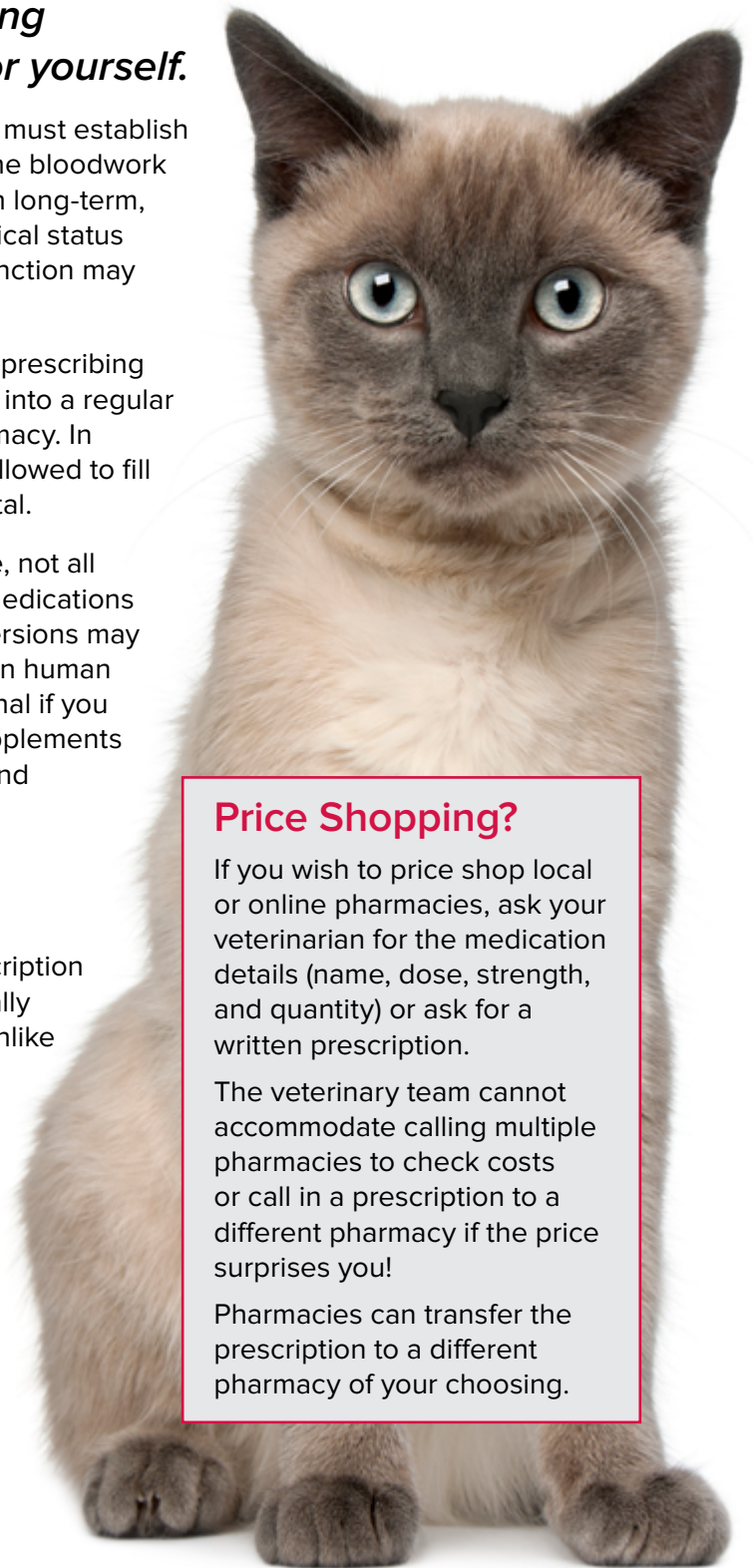
## Prescription prices

You have the option of price shopping for your pet's prescription needs. Drug prices can vary by pharmacy — even drastically between pharmacies across the street from each other. Unlike prescriptions for humans, that may be covered partially or in full by insurance, pet prescriptions are purchased at cash prices. (If you have pet insurance, you may be reimbursed dependent on your coverage).

There are ways to save on your pet's prescriptions:

- Switching to a safe and appropriate human or veterinary generic formulation
- Memberships, rewards, discount, or savings card programs through your local pharmacy
- Free mobile apps and online search tools that track prescription prices and coupons
- Manufacturer rebates

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### Price Shopping?

If you wish to price shop local or online pharmacies, ask your veterinarian for the medication details (name, dose, strength, and quantity) or ask for a written prescription.

The veterinary team cannot accommodate calling multiple pharmacies to check costs or call in a prescription to a different pharmacy if the price surprises you!

Pharmacies can transfer the prescription to a different pharmacy of your choosing.



*Your Pet's Prescriptions - continued***Online pharmacies**

Buying your pet's medications online can be a convenient way to save time and money, but use caution when choosing an internet pharmacy.

When a veterinarian prescribes a medication and the client purchases it directly from the veterinary hospital, the product is tracked from its source. The veterinarian can guarantee the product has been stored at ideal temperatures, in its original packaging and is not expired. When a client orders the medication from an online pharmacy, these things cannot be verified. This may cause several problems. For example, if the medication ordered is not properly shipped (meaning it is allowed to get too hot or too cold) or is not in the proper packaging, it may be damaged or unusable, it may not be effective, or in rare cases, less safe.

Only purchase prescriptions from online pharmacies which are accredited by the National Association of Boards of Pharmacy (NABP). NABP-accredited pharmacies are a part of the ".pharmacy program" and will have a ".pharmacy" domain name. The program is designed to better meet the safety and security challenges for online consumers. It makes it easier for consumers to identify legitimate online pharmacies. The program also ensures that medications are dispensed by a licensed pharmacist and sourced in accordance with responsible standards of care. Any website bearing the .pharmacy seal is certified to have met state licensure requirements and is a safe and ethical distributor of prescription medications.

Not all pharmacies are registered as online pharmacies, but they are just as reputable and held to high standards with the NABP. For example, some compounding pharmacies with online portals are registered with the FDA as 503B pharmacies. These pharmacies are also known as 'outsourcing facilities' and they meet all the regulatory standards for the FDA and NABP.

To order a prescription medication or diet from an online pharmacy, simply search for the product and add the chosen item to your cart. When checking out, you will be prompted to enter the contact information of the prescribing veterinarian. Unless a paper prescription is provided before the request, the online pharmacy will contact the veterinary office for prescription approval. This will be done by fax, email or phone. The prescription must be ordered and paid for before the pharmacy contacts the veterinary office.

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## Potential concerns and errors encountered when ordering from online pharmacies that may slow down the prescription process:

- **Incorrect orders placed**
  - Incorrect item – item ordered must be exactly the same as prescribed or the prescription will not be valid. The veterinary office cannot change your order once it is placed!
  - Incorrect quantity – medications often are priced by the pill. If you order a single tablet but need thirty, the order must be cancelled and reordered.
  - Generic vs. brand name medication – not all generics are equivalent to brand name products, and if your veterinarian needs the brand name product, but you order the generic, the order must be canceled then re-ordered (this is also true for the reverse scenario).
- **Allowing enough time for processing**
  - Review the FAQs for the pharmacy to have a better understanding of the time it will take to receive your order.
  - The veterinarian is contacted after other portions of the request are completed.
  - Most veterinarians require up to 72 hours to review a prescription request.
  - Once the prescription is approved, the pharmacy will need to process and fill it before shipping.
- **Incorrect veterinarian information**
  - Some accounts will default to previous veterinarians you have seen; they may not be the current prescribing veterinarian.
  - If the incorrect veterinarian receives the request, it may be denied or delayed.
  - Other veterinarians at the practice site can't approve the prescription; only the veterinarian who saw your pet.
  - To make sure that your prescription request is received by the correct veterinarian, please use **ONLY the phone number** for location identification purposes:
    - Ohio State Veterinary Medical Center – Columbus: **614-292-3551**
    - Ohio State Veterinary Medical Center –Dublin: **614-889-8070**
    - Ohio State Veterinary Medical Center – Primary Care (SOCC): **614-292-1573**



### Prescription refills

The best way to avoid running out of medications is to order refills on time! Some medications can cause serious effects if stopped abruptly. Make sure you know your practice's refill policy and allow enough time for prescriptions to be processed by both the veterinary office and the pharmacy.



**Questions about your pet's prescriptions? If you've purchased medications from the pharmacy team at Ohio State's Veterinary Medical Center, you can contact them directly at 614-292-1010.**

**Otherwise please contact your prescribing veterinarian.**



**THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY**  
VETERINARY MEDICAL CENTER

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[vet.osu.edu/vmc](http://vet.osu.edu/vmc)