

Anti-inflammatories (NSAIDs)

Covid-19 update

At the moment, your veterinary practice may be operating a reduced service and need more time to process repeat prescriptions/book check-ups. It's important to request your pet's medication before they run out. If your pet has already run out of medication, contact your vet ASAP.

Overview

- Anti-inflammatories (Non-Steroidal Anti-Inflammatory Drugs/NSAIDs) are excellent at reducing swelling, pain and high temperatures.
- NSAID's are very commonly used by vets for both short term and long term problems.
- There are many different types of NSAID available – your vet will choose the most suitable for your pet.
- As with any medication, side effects are possible, but can often be avoided by careful dosing.

Uses

Anti-inflammatories, otherwise known as 'Non-Steroidal Anti-inflammatory drugs' or 'NSAIDs', are a group of medications that reduce swelling, pain and high temperatures. They are commonly used for minor injuries, broken bones, after operations and for long-term conditions such as arthritis. There are many different NSAIDs available; some common examples are meloxicam and carprofen. NSAIDs are available as a liquid, tablet or injection and are available for most species, including dogs, cats and rabbits. NSAIDs such as paracetamol and ibuprofen used in human medicine are different to pet NSAIDs and can be dangerous, sometimes even fatal to pets.

Never use human medications for your pet unless advised by your vet.

Should I give NSAIDs with food?

Always give NSAIDs with food unless specifically advised by your vet.

Side effects

Although NSAIDs are generally very safe, like any medication, they have the potential to cause side effects. If side effects occur, they are often very mild, and can include:

- **Vomiting and/or diarrhoea.** NSAIDs can sometimes cause vomiting and/or diarrhoea, which usually improves if the NSAID is stopped. It's important to always give NSAIDs with food.
- **Stomach ulcers.** Stomach ulcers are rare but possible, especially if your pet receives an overdose of the drug or already has a stomach problem.
- **Kidney effects.** If used over a long period, NSAIDs can be hard on the kidneys, especially if your pet already has a kidney problem. Talk to your vet if you have concerns about your pet's kidneys.

Side effects are much more likely in the case of an overdose, which is why it's important to only ever give medications that have been prescribed by your vet and stick to the exact dose and instructions. For more details about side effects, read the paper handout given with the medicine.

Drug interactions. Some drugs (such as [steroids](#)), shouldn't be given at the same time as NSAIDs. It's also important not to give more than one type of NSAID at the same time because this can make harmful side effects more likely. Always mention any medications your pet is already receiving when your vet is prescribing a new medication.

When to contact your vet

Stop giving your pet their NSAIDs and contact your vet if you notice any of the following:

- Vomiting (+/- blood)
- Diarrhoea (+/- blood)
- Very dark or black poo (digested blood)
- Abdominal (tummy) pain
- Drinking or weeing more than usual
- A reduced appetite

You know your pet best. If they don't have the symptoms listed above but you are still concerned, always contact your vet.

Can I give ibuprofen or paracetamol?

Never give your pet a human medicine unless your vet has told you to. Human NSAIDs, such as aspirin, paracetamol and ibuprofen can poison pets.

- Paracetamol is particularly toxic to cats
- Ibuprofen is particularly toxic to dogs

Contact your vet ASAP if your pet accidentally eats any human medication.

In some cases, your vet may prescribe a human medication but they will only do this if they can prescribe a safe dose and there is no alternative.

Am I eligible for PDSA veterinary treatment?

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