

Antibiotics for Cats

Antibiotics for Cats: What You Need to Know

Antibiotics can be lifesavers when it comes to treating bacterial infections in your cat, but it's essential to use them wisely to ensure they remain effective. Let's dive into what antibiotics are, when your cat might need them, and how to administer them safely.

What Are Antibiotics?

Antibiotics are medications designed to combat bacterial infections in both humans and animals. They work by killing bacteria or inhibiting their growth, helping to prevent the spread of infection. However, it's important to note that antibiotics are ineffective against viruses, so they aren't always necessary for every illness your cat might face.



Your vet may prescribe antibiotics in various forms, including:

- Tablets
- Liquid solutions
- Drops
- Creams
- Injections

Why Would My Cat Need Antibiotics?

If your cat has been diagnosed with a bacterial infection that's unlikely to clear up on its own or could potentially spread to other animals, your vet will likely recommend antibiotics. Prompt treatment is crucial, as untreated bacterial infections can lead to more severe complications.

How to Give Your Cat Antibiotics



Following your vet's instructions on how to administer antibiotics is vital. Be sure to complete the full course, even if your cat seems to improve before finishing the medication. Here are some tips on administering different forms of antibiotics:

Tablets and Liquids



For tablets, many can be crushed and mixed with a tasty treat, like pate or tuna. Just check with your vet first to ensure it's okay to crush the medication. Here's a fun trick: give your cat a treat first, then follow it up with the medicated treat, and end with another treat to create a positive experience.

Some tablets need to be taken on an empty stomach or can't be crushed. In these cases, you may need to give the tablet directly by hand. Using a pill popper can simplify this process.

If your cat is on liquid antibiotics, the best way to administer them is to have your cat sitting in your lap. A second pair of hands can help, and always keep some treats on standby to reward your cat afterward!

Creams, Sprays, or Drops

When it comes to creams or drops, try applying them while your cat is on your lap. An Elizabethan collar can prevent your cat from licking the cream off, or you can apply it just before feeding, using mealtime as a distraction.

Injections or Drips



Injections or intravenous treatments will always be handled by your vet. Your vet might ask for a follow-up appointment to check on your cat's progress.

Possible Side Effects of Antibiotics

While not common, some cats may experience side effects from antibiotics. Watch for signs like:

- Loss of appetite
- Lethargy or tiredness
- Diarrhoea
- Nausea
- Vomiting

If you notice any of these symptoms, or if you're worried about your cat's reaction to their medication, don't hesitate to contact your vet. It's crucial to finish the antibiotic course unless your vet advises otherwise, as stopping early could lead to incomplete treatment.

What If You Forget a Dose?

If you forget to give your cat their antibiotic dose, take it as soon as you remember, then continue the treatment as normal. However, if it's close to the time for the next dose, skip the missed dose and don't double up. If you're unsure, ask your vet for guidance.

What If You Accidentally Overdose?

If you accidentally give your cat a double dose, it might make them unwell. Although serious harm is rare, it's best to consult your vet for advice.

Why Are Antibiotics Prescribed with Caution?

Antibiotic resistance is a growing global concern, primarily due to the overuse of these medications. When bacteria are exposed to antibiotics too frequently, they can adapt and become stronger, making it increasingly challenging to treat infections effectively.

Vets carefully consider whether your cat truly needs antibiotics and determine the appropriate dosage to ensure their safety and health. Using antibiotics judiciously is crucial not only for your cat's well-being but for public health as well.

By staying informed and following your vet's guidance, you can help ensure that your cat receives the best care possible and that antibiotics remain a viable option for treating bacterial infections in the future!