

# ANIMAL HOSPITAL OF LANESVILLE

1849 Highway 11 Lanesville, IN 47136 (812) 952-3643

## **Ordering Prescription Medication over the Internet**

By Dr. Rene Wingerter

We have been hearing advertisements lately for web sites where you can order prescription medications for your pet over the Internet. At first glance this seems like a wonderful idea. The pet owner can save some money and your local veterinarian doesn't have the expense of keeping a large inventory on hand. Unfortunately, it is more complicated than that.

Some Internet companies have been conducting business illegally or have been mishandling the drugs. Either they are not licensed in Indiana because they could not pass the basic requirements, or they lost their licenses because they were performing illegal activities.

Prescription medicine can be very dangerous if used incorrectly. It can also be very delicate, having to be stored at certain temperatures or protected from bright light. It cannot be sold past its expiration date. Often there are many drugs with similar names or that look the same, but are vastly different. The size or milligram is also important and the wrong dose can be deadly to your pet. If the Veterinarian never sees the drug, they can't be certain you are getting what you asked for.

There are several legal requirements the veterinarian must follow also. The doctor must know the health status of the patient, have a diagnosis or a reason for prescribing the medication and have an accurate weight. Veterinarians may have their own rules for current Rabies vaccinations or recent blood tests, too.

Many drug manufacturers feel that their medications may not be handled correctly by some of these internet companies, so they will not stand behind the product and all warranties are void. So if the product does not work or makes your pet sick, you are without legal recourse.

The worst part is that some of these companies are less than scrupulous. There have been cases where they did not have licensed pharmacists filling these prescriptions and some prescriptions were filled inaccurately. It was also found that some companies were

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forging veterinarians' signatures in order to fill prescriptions when the animal had never been seen by this vet.

And, after all of this, most find out that with shipping and handling charges, they did not save any money at all.

Everyone wants to save some money, but not if it could hurt their pet. If you have any questions, please feel free to call us at the Animal Hospital of Lanesville at 952-3643. You can also get online at [www.fda.gov](http://www.fda.gov) or call 888-463-6332 to learn more about the Do's and Don'ts of Buying Medications On-Line. 🐾