



## Administering Medications – Dog

Dr. Heather Gray, Diplomate of the American College of Veterinary Ophthalmologists

### Topical (Eye) Medications

#### *Drops*

Some dogs will sit still for their medications, however others may need some form of restraint. Small dogs may be most comfortable seated on the owners lap. For larger dogs it may be easiest to have them sit in a corner with the care giver standing over them (back facing the wall so that your hand is coming from behind the head and is not readily visible to them) or, alternatively, you can face the pet. It may be helpful to make treatment times into a reward period so your pet knows that they will receive a treat after you finish giving the drops.

To administer the medication, hold the muzzle with your nondominant hand and tilt the head up. Use the side of your dominant hand to pull the upper eyelid up to open the eye and simultaneously hold the bottle a few centimeters from the eye to prevent accidentally traumatizing the eye. Squeeze the bottle and give 1 drop as directed.

**\* The administration of topical medications will be demonstrated to you by a technician or Dr. Gray before you leave the hospital with your pet. Please feel free to ask any questions or discuss any concerns regarding the administration of the medications at that time.**

#### *Ointments*

The animal should be restrained as above. Use the side of your hand (dominant) to pull down the lower eyelid to create a pocket. Hold the tube in your dominant hand a few centimeters away from the eye to prevent the tube from poking the eye. Squeeze a small amount (approximately ¼ inch strip) of ointment across the surface of the eye or into the pocket that you have formed. Allow the eye to shut to distribute the ointment over the entire surface of the eye.

### Oral

#### *Tablets/Capsules*

If the medications can or should be given with food it will be labeled as such. If the tablet or capsule can be given with food, you can make a small meatball with canned food, cheese, peanut butter, or anything else that your pet will readily eat. It is best if they do not chew the meatball since they will get a bad taste in their mouth if the tablet breaks, making it harder to give the next time. Always be careful not to be bitten when giving oral medications.

In those cases where the medication cannot be given with food you will need to pill your pet. You can do this by holding your pet's top jaw with your non-dominant hand. Hold the tablet or capsule between the thumb and forefinger of your dominant hand. Tilt the head back and pull open the bottom jaw with the hand holding the pill. Place the pill as far back over the tongue as possible (if the pill is not placed far enough back, the dog will spit it back up). Immediately close the mouth. Blowing on or touching the nose may encourage them to swallow.

#### *Liquid*

Liquid medications should be administered at the side of the mouth between the cheek and teeth. Draw up the prescribed amount, using the syringe/applicator that accompanies the drug, and slowly squirt the medication into the pouch. Hold the mouth closed until your pet swallows (blowing on or touching the nose may encourage this). Alternatively, the medication may be mixed with soft/canned food if your pet will readily ingest it.