

# Use and Abuse of Antibiotics on our pets

***In the Western world the wonderful discovery of antibiotics created a whole new way of curing disease for the medical industry. Not only for human beings but for our pets.***

But at what cost to the health of our pets?

We are becoming very self aware that the overuse of antibiotics is bad for us for many reasons. They decrease our resistance to bacteria, reduce the strength our immune system and over time they have created stronger and more resistant super bugs to name only a few. These issues affect our pets also.

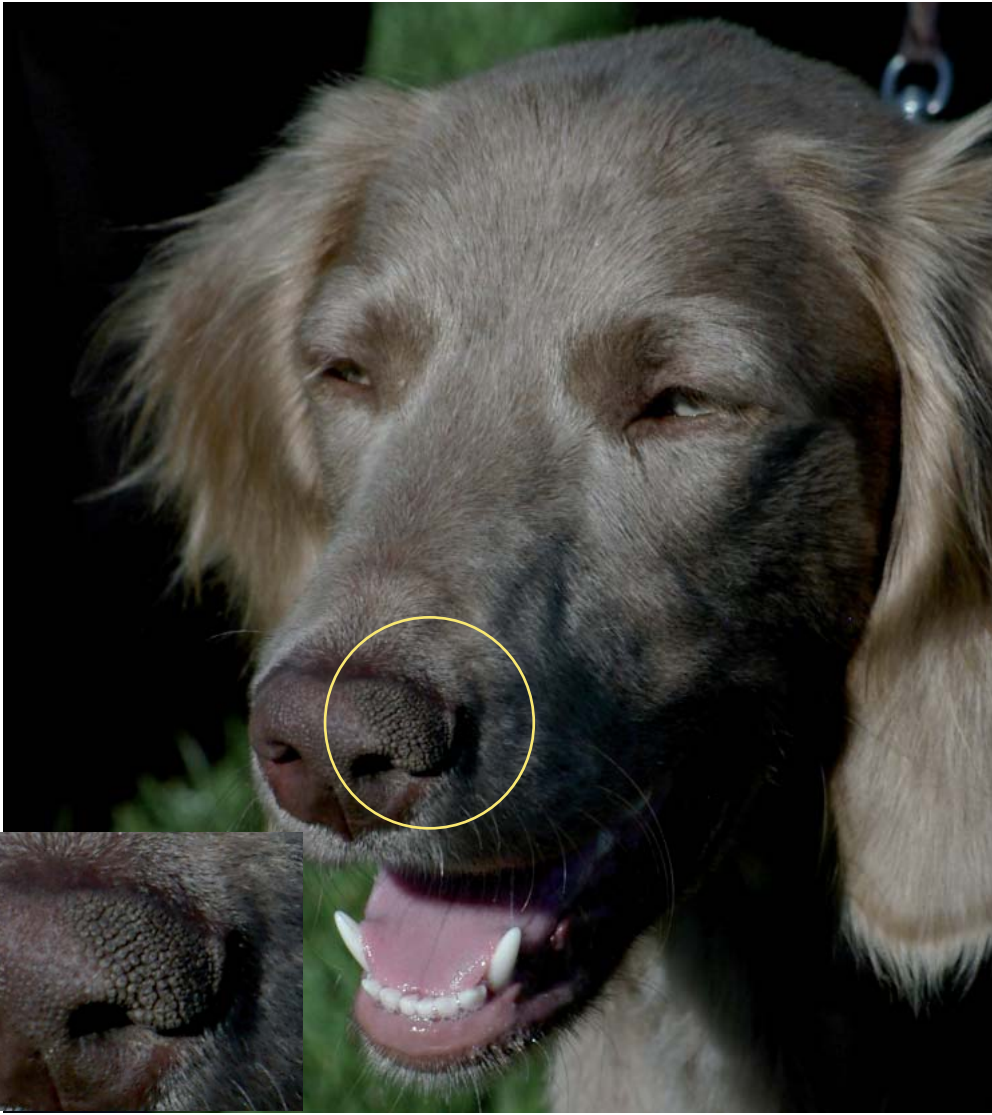
Looking at it simply, antibiotics kill bacteria. They cannot differentiate the good bacteria from the bad, so they kill all targeted bacteria. In order for our pets to live long healthy lives it is important they have a balance of good bacteria in the body. Let's use the bowel for example. In the bowel our pets have hundreds of different beneficial bacteria. Without it they can suffer from many diseases like , irritable bowel syndrome (IBS), skin allergies, bowel ulceration and even constipation. When antibiotics are used in times of illness it will kill the bad bacteria that is making your pet ill, but it will also kill the good bacteria that keeps your pet healthy. Over time the bowel will try and replenish the bacteria and if the bowel is healthy the bacteria will continue to multiply. But, what happens when antibiotics are continuously used? When does the good bacteria have the opportunity to replenish? Without them the bowel can become very unhealthy. Good bacteria finds it difficult to replenish and multiply in an unhealthy bowel. This is where we may see the beginnings of chronic disease in our pets.

Here is an example of antibiotic abuse

This dog had a Staphylococci infection on and in her nose, confirmed via a skin biopsy. The top right corner is dry and cracked and she wept black discharge from her nostril. She had significant weight loss and her owner could not get her to put any weight on. She developed this problem after 9 months of antibiotic treatment for a mouth infection from a stuck bone. The vet tried for months to treat the nose with stronger and stronger antibiotics as well as antibiotic creams. The problem would begin to clear but always returned. The abuse of antibiotics has created an antibiotic resistant bacteria.

After visiting me I stopped all antibiotics immediately. I put her on a natural diet and supplements and she immediately began to put on weight, get a shiny coat and appeared far more healthier. I treated her nose with a range of herbs, immune stimulants, antibacterials and homoeopathics. It took many months and over time the Staphylococci infection has cleared from her nose.

Before



After



If you have to put your pet on antibiotics it is advisable to put them on a good quality probiotic to counteract the side effects. It is important to remember that good bacteria will not survive in an unhealthy bowel. Use a probiotic like DigestaVite Plus in conjunction with a probiotic. This will insure that you didn't waste your money on an expensive probiotic, only to send it to its death.

**ProBiotics**

Like any medication, there are good quality pro biotics and there are average products on the market. In this instance you really do get what you pay for.

**What to look for?**

A multistrain probiotic. The more bacteria and more strains you have in your probiotic the better your results will be.

Different strains of good bacteria can perform different functions. A multistrain probiotic with the below strains can assist the following

1. digestive health and function
2. immune health and function
3. urogenital health and function
4. management of medically diagnosed irritable bowel syndrome (IBS)
5. temporary relief of diarrhoea.

Below is a chart of good bacteria and the conditions they can assist. The bacteria names are long and confusing even to say. This chart isn't for you to memorise but to give you an understanding of how probiotics work and how different strains will effect different functions in the body. By killing off these types of good bacteria with antibiotics, you can see what functions may be affected by disease.

<b>ProBiotic</b>	<b>Digestive Support</b>	<b>Immune Support</b>	<b>Urogenital Support</b>	<b>IBS Support</b>	<b>Diarrhoea</b>
<b>Lactobacillus acidophilus</b>	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
<b>Lactobacillus casei</b>	YES	YES			
<b>Lactobacillus fermentum</b>			YES		
<b>Lactobacillus plantarum</b>	YES	YES		YES	
<b>Lactobacillus rhamnosus</b>		YES	YES		
<b>Bifidobacterium bifidum</b>	YES				
<b>Bifidobacterium breve</b>		YES		YES	YES
<b>Bifidobacterium longum</b>	YES				
<b>Streptococcus thermophilus</b>	YES	YES			

Another example is this young dog who had been diagnosed with skin allergies. He had been treated repeatedly with antibiotics and anti inflammatories. These pictures are the end result of antibiotic abuse. After two weeks of natural treatment his itching began to subside. After a further six weeks his red, irritated skin began to return to a normal colour, without inflammation and the itching ceased. In the next few months his coat will begin to grow back to normal.



Another patient of mine had a German Sheppard that at the base of his lip would become cracked and bleed. She advised me that she would go the vet and he would prescribe antibiotics. The problem would clear up temporarily then come back again in a few weeks time.

I asked the question "Why do you go to the vet for antibiotics? If it was you with the cracked lips, would you go to the doctor for antibiotics?" She looked at me strangely and said, "For me, no". So I asked "Why do you put your dog on antibiotics?" She replied, "Not sure, it's just what the vet does". This dog was vitamin and mineral deficient and after putting him on Natural Animal Solutions DigestaVite Plus the problem disappeared without the use of antibiotics and never returned.

This is a common conversation I have with my patients owners and the dialogue is always very similar. As humans we are becoming very aware of our own health and how natural therapies are important and beneficial to our health. We now know that doctors are not the answer to all our health problems. We will go to our naturopath, Chinese herbal doctor, physiotherapist and chiropractor. Yet when it comes to our pets health, we are still trained into thinking that our local vet is our only answer to our pets health and the quick antibiotic fix is the way to go. If the illness isn't serious or urgent or your pet is struggling with a chronic problem your vet can't fix with repeats of antibiotics, look for a natural alternative. They do exist and they do work.

As an animal naturopath my fear of antibiotics is its misuse. It is the easy cure for all and every problem. In many cases we see the use of antibiotics as a cover up fix, rather than finding the root cause of the problem and curing that. I do believe there is a place for these drugs in veterinary medicine. Use in emergencies, critical conditions and serious illness.

Antibiotics are now used for even the most minor of illness's. Or when the cause of the illness is unknown. We need to question the use of these drugs as they can be detrimental to our pets health rather than beneficial. New and natural alternatives to antibiotics are available to assist your pets health. Ask your vet to try these natural alternatives or speak to an animal naturopath. They are extremely effective, will cure rather than hide the symptoms and won't give your pets health problems in the future.