**Your Guide to Veterinary Medicines**  
**Supply Routes**

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### On-Farm Aspects  
*Storage, Record-Keeping, Disposal, etc*

**How should I store my supplies of animal remedies?**  
It is recommended that medicines be stored in a locked cabinet.

**What quantities of animal medicines can I have on my farm at any given time?**  
As a general rule, as little as possible, consistent with the anticipated needs of your animals. In the case of prescription medicines (POM), you may only have quantities on-farm covered by a written prescription.

**What On-Farm Medicines Record must I keep?**  
You must keep a record of all medicines coming on to the farm, a record of all medicines administered and a record of unused/out of date medicines which are returned (Animal Remedies Record). In the case of prescription medicines (POM), the prescription will suffice as the incoming record.

**How do I dispose of unused or out of date animal remedies?**  
The veterinary practice, licensed merchant or pharmacy which sold you a particular product is required to have arrangements in place to take back any unused or out of date quantity of that product.

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### Buying Animal Remedies

**Where can I buy animal remedies?**  
This depends on the sales category (route of supply) given to the product when it was licensed by the Irish Medicines Board:

- **Licensed Merchant (LM)** products can be bought from any Licensed Merchant outlet, pharmacy or vet. You do not need a prescription for (LM) products.
- **Pharmacy Only (PS)** or **Prescription Only Exempt (POM(E))** products, can be bought from pharmacies or vets. You do not need a prescription for (PS) or (POM(E)) products.
- **Prescription Only (POM)** products, firstly require a written prescription from a vet, you are then free to purchase the medicine from any vet, pharmacy or for certain (POM) products, from Licensed Merchant outlets. (See inside)

**How will I know the sales category of an animal remedy?**  
All products must show the route of supply on the labelling and packaging.

**Can I buy animal remedies from salespersons calling to my farm?**  
Some suppliers have licences under which their salespersons are allowed to call to farms to take orders for non-POM animal remedies, which are supplied through a separate delivery service. These salespersons are required to carry a copy of their licence, which farmers should always ask to check.

**Can I buy animal remedies from a mail order catalogue?**  
Yes, but only a limited number of suppliers are licensed to sell non-POM products. Before buying, you should check that the seller has a mail order licence.

**Can I buy animal remedies on the internet?**  
Yes, but only non-POM products from DAFF authorised websites.

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The IFA Animal Project Team has compiled this information leaflet to assist farmers in the sourcing of their veterinary medicine products from the best value suppliers, confident they are fully compliant with the Animal Remedies Regulation.

DAFF have approved the answers in this information leaflet. This leaflet does not claim to represent a legal interpretation of the Animal Remedies Regulation. Further detailed information is available on the DAFF website.

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John Waters, Chairman  
IFA Animal Health Project Team
**Prescription Only Medicines (POM)**

**Prescriptions**

**Who can prescribe for my animals?**
A vet who has taken on responsibility for the professional care of the animals, who visits the farm **at least once in a 12 month period** and is available for follow-up consultation/treatment. Farmers are free under animal remedies legislation to engage more than one vet to deal with different aspects of their animal health needs, and it is recommended each vet is kept informed. However, in the case of intramammarys, where your herd is part of a *Mastitis Control Programme* (as defined in the legislation), the prescribing vet is not legally obliged to have been on the farm in the previous 12 months.

**Must my vet visit my farm before prescribing?**
This is primarily a matter for the vet’s clinical judgement in each case, provided he/she meets the criteria above.

**Is my vet obliged to give me a written prescription for (POM) animal remedies?**
**Yes,** even where he/she administers the medicine to your animals.

**Can a prescription cover more than one category of (POM) animal remedies?**
**Yes.** Your vet can enter all of the medicines he/she is prescribing at a given time on a single prescription. This is particularly relevant where you consult your vet about your anticipated needs for the coming season.

**How should animals be identified on a prescription?**
This depends on the particular situation e.g. if a vet is prescribing for a specific disease episode in 1 or 2 animals, he/she should identify it/them by the tag number. However, if the prescription is for a group of animals, then they should be identified by reference to that group, e.g. ‘animals in pen X’ or ‘all animals under x age’.

**For how long is a prescription valid?**
The legislation allows for prescriptions to be valid for a **maximum of 12 months.** The vet must specify the maximum life of a prescription in each case.

**Purchase of Prescription Only Medicines (POM)**

**Do I have to buy my (POM) medicine needs from the prescribing vet?**
**No.** You can purchase your (POM) products from another vet, a pharmacy or, for some (POM) products from Licensed Merchant outlets.

**Do I have to buy all the (POM) animal remedies listed on a prescription at the one time or in the same outlet?**
**No.** You are free, within the life of the prescription, to buy as you need. When a supplier part-fills a prescription, he/she is obliged to return the original and copy to you showing how much has been supplied, so that you can use the prescription again.

**What happens when a prescription is finished?**
The person supplying the final quantity of an animal remedy, covered by a particular prescription, is required to keep the original for his/her records and give you back the copy with the word **DISPENSED** entered on it. The farmer is required to keep this copy as part of his/her farm record.

**Can a prescription be faxed or emailed?**
**No.** The farmer should get ‘hard’ copies (i.e. original plus one copy) of the prescription from the vet and present them at point of purchase.

**What happens if I need a (POM) medicine in an emergency and my usual vet is away?**
Vets are required to make arrangements for cover when they are not available, either from another member of their group practice or with another practice. Where the needs of a sick animal are urgent and it is not possible to get a written prescription for dispensing, the vet is allowed to contact a pharmacy so that emergency supplies of medicines can be made available. **However, the written prescription must be supplied no later than 72 hours afterwards.**
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