



Prescription veterinary medicines control and use in South Africa

Two Acts directly control the use and availability of prescription veterinary medicines in South Africa:

- **Medicines and Related Substances Control Act, Act 101 of 1965:**
 - Regulates the availability and access to veterinary medicines by its schedules and the South African Health Products Regulatory Authority (SAHPRA) implements this Act. SAHPRA registers all scheduled veterinary medicines after approval of the safety, efficacy and quality of these.
- **Veterinary and Para-veterinary Professions Act, Act 19 of 1982):**
 - Controls the conduct of veterinarians prescribing, dispensing and/or administering the veterinary medicines and the South African Veterinary Council (SAVC) is the regulatory body for this Act.

Act 101/1965 scheduling controls the availability of veterinary medicines as follows:

- Schedules 1 and 2 are available from pharmacies without a veterinary script.
- Schedules 3 to 6 require a veterinary script that a veterinarian may only issue under these conditions:

The veterinarian needs to consult with the client and physically examine the animal patient/s to make a diagnosis of the disease i.e. there needs to be a valid 'veterinarian-client-patient' relationship. The veterinarian can then prescribe a medicine (Schedule 3 upwards, if applicable) for treatment and dispense this medicine or the client can fill this script at a pharmacy.

A veterinary script also applies to:

- The extra-label use of medicines (use of a veterinary medicine not on the approved package insert or use of human medicines for veterinary use)
- Compounding a medicine meaning to mix, combine, package and label a medicine for specific patient/s at an approved compounding facility, if there is no registered medicine available.

A veterinarian may **NOT** prescribe and dispense Schedule 3 medicines upwards if there is no valid 'veterinarian-client-patient' relationship. Also, a vet may not supply a client with medicines from a script that has been issued by a different vet. Such scripts must be filled at a pharmacy.

For chronic disease conditions of the patient where the client is issued a script for 6 months, the vet may not issue another script for the next 6 months after the prescription is finished, unless the vet does the required 6-monthly check-up on the patient.

The vet is liable for prosecution by the South African Veterinary Council (SAVC) and the South African Health Products Regulatory Authority (SAHPRA) if he/she contravenes these.

