



WISCONSIN
VETERINARY
REFERRAL CENTER

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The Midwest's Leader in Emergency and Specialty Veterinary Care

APPLYING CREAMS, OINTMENTS & LOTIONS

Applying topical medications to your pet can sometimes be a challenge. The information provided in this handout may help make treating your pet easier – for both of you.

What is the difference between creams, ointments and lotions?

Creams are non-greasy. Ointments have an oily base. Lotions are liquid preparations. All are similar as far as application is concerned. Creams, ointments and lotions are for external use only. It is important to prevent your pet from licking and swallowing them.

Be sure to follow any directions concerning application of the product, e.g. using gloves, etc. This is important since some veterinary preparations may be irritating to human skin.

My dog is perfectly fine until I try to put the preparation on and then he becomes very agitated.

This may represent discomfort or actual pain. It is always a good idea to get someone to hold your dog, especially when applying medications to a sensitive or painful area. If you prefer, your veterinarian can recommend several types of comfortable muzzles that you can use when treating your pet.



I can apply the preparation but my dog licks it off as soon as it is applied.



A good tip in this case is to apply the product just before the dog is fed. Another technique is to take your dog for a short walk immediately after applying the medication. Most topical preparations work better if they are gently massaged in for a few moments after application. If you still have trouble applying your pet's medication, please contact us and we will supply you with an Elizabethan collar. These are large plastic hoods that prevent the dog from licking at the affected area.

I have tried an Elizabethan collar but my dog goes crazy with it on!

The majority of dogs are initially upset by the collar because of its bulky size and appearance. Try giving your dog a treat or taking him for a walk to distract him from the collar. Approximately 80% of dogs will tolerate a collar with few problems.



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