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Information correct at time of writing: August 2011

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The Veterinary Medicines Directorate is an Executive Agency of the Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs

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Horses and other equidae are considered by law to be food-producing species in the European Union and therefore the medicines selected to treat them must take this into account. For full details please refer to VMGN16 (www.vmd.defra.gov.uk/public/vmr_vmgn.aspx).

You should always check the labelling of the veterinary medicinal product (VMP) that you wish to use, to determine if it is authorised for use in food-producing horses or not. If it is authorised for use in food-producing horses, a withdrawal period for horses will be clearly displayed.

**Always check the Passport**

If you intend to administer, prescribe or dispense any medicinal substance for use in a horse you must:

- ask to be shown the passport for the horse (if you don’t have prior knowledge of its status)
- satisfy yourself that the passport supplied relates to the horse in question and
- note whether the horse is INTENDED for human consumption or NOT INTENDED for human consumption or if there is no declaration at all.

If a passport is not available or if you are not satisfied that the passport relates to the horse in question, follow the procedure in section 3.

1. Horse declared “Not Intended for Human Consumption”

No specific prescribing restrictions apply to these horses and the prescribing cascade can be used as for any non food-producing animal. The only passport requirement is to record all vaccines administered by a veterinarian in the passport, regardless of whether or not the horse is food-producing.

- The horse should be treated with VMPs which have a UK marketing authorisation for use in horses as the first choice.
- If there is no suitable authorised product available, the cascade may be used as appropriate to prescribe an alternative medicinal product.
- Under the cascade the non food-producing horse can be treated with any VMP authorised in the UK to treat another animal species, or another condition in the horse.
- If there is no suitable VMP authorised in the UK, a VMP authorised in another Member State (MS) may be imported for use with permission from the VMD, or a UK authorised human medicine may be used.
- If there are no suitable UK or EU products available through the cascade, then a product may be specially prepared by a veterinarian, pharmacist or person holding a manufacturing authorisation to prepare that type of product.
- All retailers of VMPs have record-keeping obligations for all prescription medications that they receive and supply.

2. Horse declared “Intended for Human Consumption” OR no declaration made

When making prescribing decisions in a food-producing horse the first choice should always be a VMP authorised for use in food-producing horses.

The prescribing cascade may also be applied to these animals, but VMPs may only be used if they are authorised for use in another food-producing species and a suitable withdrawal period applied. In addition products may be selected from the “Essential Substances” list (see table), which details the additional active substances, available for use in food-producing horses with a mandatory six month withdrawal period to be applied.

**WHAT PRODUCT TYPES CAN BE USED?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A) Products authorised for food-producing horses, in the UK or EU (via Special Import Certificates) containing active substances which have a withdrawal period set for horses.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>B) UK or EU authorised products selected from the list of Essential Substances which have a withdrawal period set for food-producing species other than horses.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C) VMPs authorised in the UK only for use in non food-producing horses but which contain an active substance which is allowed to be administered to one or more food-producing species in accordance with Table 1 of Regulation (EU) 2010/15: FLM 19 20 FPD [To allow harmonisation of the labels of these products authors within the EU]. (These may only be prescribed by a veterinarian under the cascade provisions.)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**WITHDRAWAL PERIOD & INFO TO BE ENTERED ON PASSPORT**

Meat and milk withdrawal period at stated on the product label and in its Summary of Product Characteristics (SPC) must be advised and recorded but this does not have to be in the passport (see section 5).

It is the responsibility of the veterinarian to set a suitable withdrawal period. This must be recorded but this does not have to be in the passport (see section 5).

The withdrawal period must be at least 28 days (meat) or 7 days (milk) or the withdrawal period stated in the SPC of the product, whichever is longer.

A suitable withdrawal period needs to be observed.

It is the responsibility of the veterinarian to set a suitable withdrawal period. This withdrawal period and all treatment details must be recorded but this does not have to be in the passport (see section 5).

The withdrawal period must be at least 28 days (meat) or 7 days (milk) or the withdrawal period stated in the SPC of the product, whichever is longer.

**WHAT PRODUCT TYPES CANNOT BE USED?**

A) Use of any product that contains an active substance which is not contained within Table 1 (the Allowed List) of Regulation EU 2010/15: FLM 19 20 FPD on the list of Essential Substances, such as phenylbutazone, will automatically mean that the horse must be permanently excluded from the food chain.

B) The use of any active substances included on the “Prohibited Substances” list.

If any of these substances are administered the horse can NEVER be slaughtered for human consumption and the declaration in the horse’s passport must be signed at section IX by the veterinarian or the owner “not intended for human consumption”. This is irreversible.

The list of prohibited substances is current (January 2023):

- Aristolochia
- Chloramphenicol
- Chloroform
- Chlorpromazine
- Colchicine
- Dapsone
- Dimetridazole
- Metronidazole
- Nitrofurans (including Furazolidone)
- Ronidazole
- Sulfadiazine

Veterinarians should check this list regularly for changes.


Information on all UK authorised veterinary medicines can be accessed on the VMD Website via the Product Information Database. The Product Information Database can be found on the Home Page of www.vmd.defra.gov.uk.