



## Pre-Visit Pharmaceuticals (PVPs)

As part of our commitment to Fear Free medicine, your veterinary team has prescribed medication(s) to help reduce your pet's fear, anxiety, and stress, so that they are more comfortable at their veterinary visits. We use a variety of anti-anxiety and sedative medications. Each patient may respond a little differently to medications, so it can take a few trials of medications, and/or dosages to determine the most effective options for your pet.

### Medication Trial

- The goal of a trial is to give a single dose of the medication at home to determine what effect the medication has on your pet.
- How long after dosing do you notice an effect (typically 1.5-2 hours)? Does your pet appear completely normal? Does he look sleepy? Is he slower when he tries to stand?
- How long does the effect last?
- Be aware that many PVP combinations appear effective in a calm environment (home) but may not be once any stimulation is added.
- Try to create some stimulation (ring doorbell, knock on door, go for a car ride, etc.)

### What to Expect

- Drowsiness
- Dilated pupils, and elevated third eyelids
- Slow movements and delayed responses, reluctance to moving around
- Mild to moderate instability walking, particularly up or down stairs
- Effects can last for about 8-12 hours. In some cases, your pet may be drowsy for the rest of the day.

**Although uncommon, occasionally pets may be more sensitive to these medications, leading to more noticeable side effects such as:**

- Substantial drowsiness that may last for several hours
- Mild urinary incontinence (leaking or accidents)
- In rare instances we can see the opposite effect: an increase in fear, anxiety, stress, or reactivity in the form of hyperactivity, pacing, whining, or agitation

***Please don't hesitate to call if you have any questions or concerns about your pet's response to the medication(s). We take these seriously and make notes for the future.***

### Injectable Sedation

- For highly fearful, and reactive pets, or in situations where your pet may be painful or uncomfortable, we may need to use injectable sedation to facilitate a thorough exam and services.
- In most cases, we do still recommend giving pre-visit pharmaceuticals (PVPs) at home prior to your pet's visit, as it can take the edge off just enough to allow our injectable medications to work more effectively. In some occasions it can allow us to use lower doses of injectable medications.
- If you think your pet may need injectable sedation for their visit, and their appointment is scheduled in the morning, withhold their normal morning meal. You can use a small treat to facilitate giving PVPs. If your appointment is in the afternoon, only feed a light morning meal.

**Will my pet need this medication for every veterinary visit?**

- Our goal is to have your pet arrive at the hospital as relaxed and comfortable as possible
- We use a multi-modal approach catered to your pet's individual preferences and needs: pre-visit pharmaceuticals (PVPs), using calming pheromones (Adaptil) and a hungry patient that will more readily accept our treats (or bring their favorite high-value treats, or toys from home).
- We hope that by reducing fear, anxiety, and stress repeatedly, and using positive reinforcement (treats, toys, brushing, etc.) we can eventually wean your pet off medications, but this can take lots of work on desensitization outside of the veterinary clinic as well. Let us know if you are interested in more information on this.
- Many pets will need PVPs at every visit to help reduce their fear, anxiety, and stress (FAS), and that's okay.